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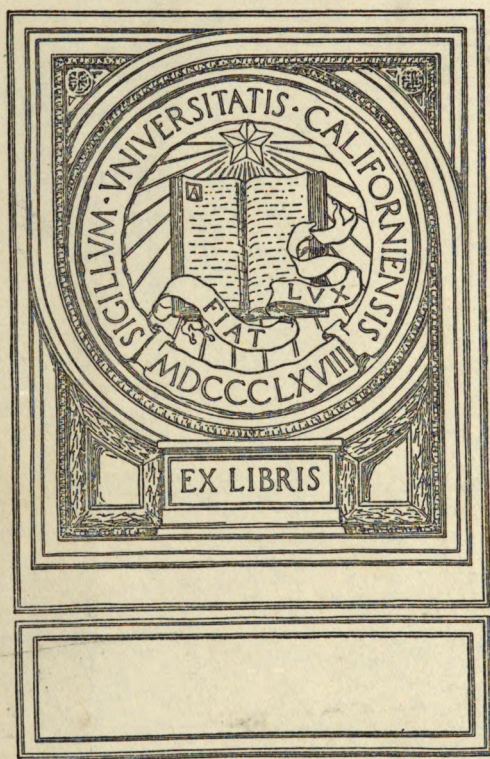
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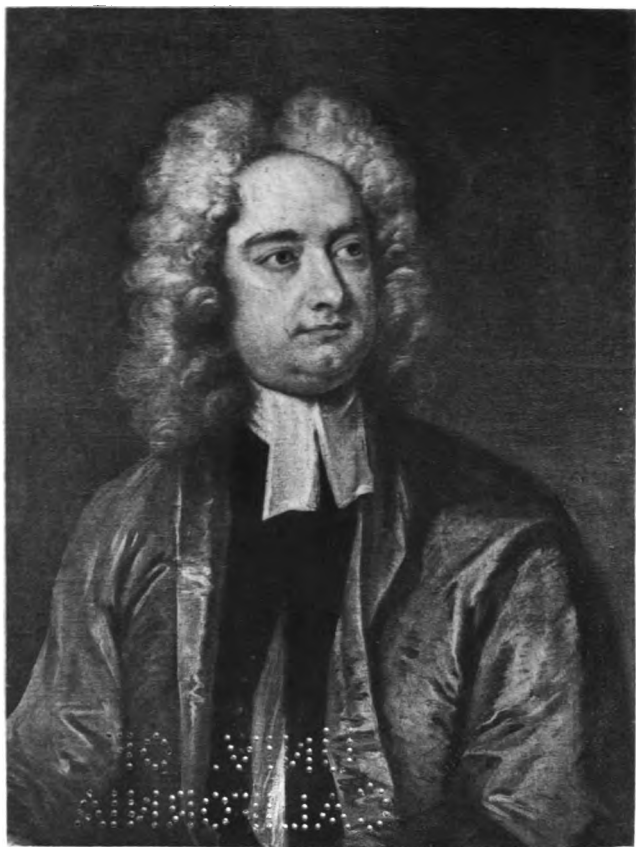
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Jonathan Swift.

Dean Swift

AND HIS WRITINGS

BY

GERALD P. MORIARTY, B.A.

"
BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD

"A person of great honour in Ireland used to tell me that my mind was like a conjured spirit, that would do mischief if I would not give it employment."—*Swift to the Rev. J. Kendall, Feb. 11, 1692.*

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PREFACE

THE biographical part of this work must be regarded as subordinate to the literary. I have attempted to describe and illustrate Swift's chief writings, merely giving such a sketch of his career as is required for a due understanding of their import.

The quotations from Swift's works and correspondence have been intentionally made as numerous and as full as possible ; it being, in my opinion, easier to give an idea of an author's genius in this way than by means of unsupported critical disquisitions. The latter are always delusive, except when a good knowledge of the works criticised has been previously obtained by the reader.

In my quotations I have modernised the spelling, and have given up the use of capital letters in the case of common nouns prevalent in Swift's time. I have also altered a few words and phrases, the crudity of which suits not with present ideas.

The edition of Swift's works mainly used has been that of Roscoe, published in 1864 by Bohn.

In dealing with Swift's character, I have contented myself with the explanation of motives, without offering any comment thereon. The reader will notice that my view differs considerably from that of certain modern writers. The latter, in a spirit of reaction against the

sombre and somewhat inaccurate picture drawn of Swift by Thackeray and M. Taine, have all but tried to raise the Dean of St. Patrick's to the rank of a saint and a hero.

With this opinion, after much study of the original authorities for Swift's life and the circumstances of his time, I find myself unable to concur. It is ill supported by the evidence; and it is self-contradictory in view of the peculiar tone of Swift's writings. An amiable parish priest could never have produced the "Tale of a Tub" or "Gulliver's Travels." A high-minded politician would never have written the "Character of Lord Wharton" or the "Legion Club."

It may, in conclusion, be doubted whether any advantage is to be gained from the present fondness for—to use a colloquialism—"whitewashing" historical characters. To paint in dark colours is not to depreciate. The Napoleon of Lanfrey is a far more interesting figure than the Napoleon of Thiers. It is true that Swift has much to urge in his excuse. He had endured more disappointments than fall to the lot of most men; and he suffered, nearly all his life, from an intermittent and distressing malady. None the less, the qualities produced by these trials were resentment, not resignation; vindictiveness, not forbearance; misanthropy, not fellow-feeling.

GERALD MORIARTY.

BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD,
October, 1892.

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ERRATUM.

Page 136, line 8: For words "but now married to a brother of the Duke of Hamilton" *read* "a different person to the wife of the Lord George Hamilton, created Earl of Orkney in 1696."

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The portraits of Stella and Vanessa are from pictures in the possession of G. Villiers Briscoe, Esq., of Bellinter, Co. Meath. The former is thus mentioned by Sir William Wilde in his "Closing Years of Dean Swift's Life": "It was originally in the possession of the distinguished Charles Ford of Woodpark, where Stella was constantly in the habit of visiting, and where she spent several months in 1723, when probably it was painted, Stella being then about forty-two. It remained, along with an original picture of Swift, at Woodpark for many years, with an unbroken thread of tradition attached to it, until it came, with the property and effects of the Ford family, into the possession of the Preston family." By permission of Mr. Preston, of Bellinter, it was engraved (not satisfactorily) as a frontispiece to Sir William Wilde's book. It afterwards passed into the possession of Mr. Preston's heir, its present owner, by whose kind permission it has been photographed, together with the portrait of Vanessa, for the present volume.

DEAN SWIFT AND HIS WRITINGS.

CHAPTER I.

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE'S SECRETARY.

Sir William Temple at Moor Park—Career and character of that statesman—Arrival of Jonathan Swift as his secretary—Retrospect on the latter : his parentage, birth and education—Enters Temple's employment—The first residence at Moor Park—Temple's treatment of Swift—The household at Moor Park—First intimacy with Stella—Return of Swift to Ireland in search of health—Second visit to Temple—Becomes M.A. of Hart Hall, Oxford—Is now entrusted with important business—His early poems—Resolves to take orders—Leaves for Ireland a second time, after quarrel with Temple—The penitential letter—Swift ordained ; receives the prebend of Kilroot—His life there—Return to Moor Park—Characteristics of the third visit—Improved position—Attaches himself to Lord Sunderland—Is disappointed—Writes the "Battle of the Books"—Death of Temple—His will.

A Swiss gentleman, who travelled through England in 1695, gives an interesting account of his visit to Sir William Temple, at Moor Park, in Surrey. The house of that celebrated negotiator and philosopher, says our informant, was the very model of an agreeable retreat. Far enough from town to escape the intrusion of the

vulgar, the air was wholesome, the land good, and the view contained but pretty. No sound could be heard save the rustling of the leaves and the murmur of a small rivulet which ran near the windows. The house was small, but convenient and neatly furnished; the garden proportioned to the house, and cultivated by the master himself. The latter, completely retired from the world, passed his time amidst the pursuit of letters and the occasional society of a few chosen friends.

Sir William Temple is the most respectable figure of the reign of Charles II. Whenever the merry monarch and his myrmidons found that they had presumed too far upon the loyalty of a long-suffering people, Temple, as the incarnation of virtue, had been always summoned to extricate them from the gulf. On the downfall of Clarendon, he had been called in to negotiate an alliance with the sound Protestant governments of Holland and Sweden. Ten years later, on the exposure of Charles' secret dealings with France, Temple's scheme for a reorganisation of the privy council, by which that body was to become an efficient check on the prerogative, was accepted without demur. Yet by the end of the reign Temple found himself completely shelved. Nor need the result be a matter of surprise. Virtue, acting as a sort of mediator in times of great national ferment, had always won success. But such moments were rare in their occurrence; and men noticed with an amused surprise that, once its task performed, Virtue had always retired from the field. In the storm and stress of a continuous political career it refused to share. The dull debate, the tortuous intrigue, the wearisome compromise, might be for others. For Virtue, was to be preserved a perpetual pre-eminence, without any of the toilsome strivings by which, in ordinary cases, that pre-eminence could be alone attained. The time

came, therefore, when Virtue found itself deserted. Fearful of making enemies, it had made no friends. Refusing to join any distinct party in the state, it had been disowned by all. At last, nothing was left for Virtue but to shake the dust from off its feet and retire to the dignified seclusion of a country seat.

The picture given of Sir William, in his later years, by his sister Martha, Lady Giffard, is hardly pleasing. His political memories were clouded by an ever-present sense of disappointment. His humour had become "very unequal, from cruel fits of spleen and melancholy." His temper, naturally bad, was kept in uneasy subjection by sheer force of will. An exact observer of nice points of honour, he was ill-apt to make allowance for the deficiencies of others; liable to strong dislikes, which he only concealed with difficulty; and kind to his inferiors, solely because he thought it his duty to be just to all men. In a word, a man capable of making a favourable impression on chance visitors, but a trying companion to his familiars, and an ungracious patron towards those unfortunates who might have to stand to him in the relation of dependants.

Early in 1689 a petition came to Temple from a widow lady, connected by blood and association with his family, asking him to provide an opening in life for her only son. Sir William, busily engaged in drawing up his memoirs, at once expressed a willingness to take the applicant into his own service as secretary. The offer was accepted; and, in the summer of 1689, a young man of humble appearance and unpractised manners, but whose strongly-marked features and piercing blue eyes indicated a nature of no common type, appeared at the threshold of Moor Park. The new-comer was Jonathan Swift.

Full details regarding his birth and parentage are sup-

plied by Swift in a fragment of autobiography, written in 1727.¹ His grandfather, Thomas Swift, vicar of Goodrich, in Herefordshire, played a stirring part in the Great Rebellion. More royalist than the king, he upheld the Stuart cause from the pulpit, garrisoned his vicarage against the parliament, and sent money and provisions to the loyal commander at Raglan Castle. "At another time," says Jonathan, who was very proud of this ancestor's exploits, "being informed that three hundred horse of the rebel party intended in a week to pass over a certain river, Mr. Swift contrived certain pieces of iron with three spikes, whereof one must always be with the point upward; he placed them overnight in the ford where he received news that the rebels would pass early the next morning, which they accordingly did, and lost two hundred of their men, who were drowned or trod to death by the falling of their horses, or torn by the spikes." In vain were his flocks driven off, and his house plundered from cellar to garret by Lord Stamford's troopers. It became necessary to extinguish this redoubtable member of the church militant. In 1646, the vicar of Goodrich was arrested and flung into prison. His private property was sequestered, and his three livings handed over to sour-visaged fanatics, of whose true Puritan zeal the parliament was well assured. Though released in 1649, he was a broken man. He died in 1658—two years before the Restoration might have brought him some redress—and his family, "four-

¹ The Swifts were an old Yorkshire family. The elder branch ended, in the male line, with Barnam Swift, a man of great wit and ability, created Viscount Carlingford, in the peerage of Ireland, in 1627. The representative of the younger branch, Thomas Swift, migrated from Yorkshire to Kent, and became preacher at St. Andrew's, Canterbury. He died in 1592. His son, William Swift, who married a Miss Philpot, was father of the Thomas Swift referred to in the text.

teen or fifteen" in number, were thrown upon the world. Five of his sons made their way to Ireland, the disturbed condition of which country held out chances of fortune to adventurers of every type. Of these, the eldest, Godwin Swift, obtained great fame as a barrister in Dublin. The "seventh or eighth son," Jonathan, though glad to take the crumbs that fell from his rich brother's table, excited the family anger by an indiscreet marriage with Mistress Abigail Eric, daughter of a poor but ancient Leicestershire family. A daughter was born to him in 1665. He obtained the post of Steward of the King's Inn, Dublin. But in 1667 he died, some months before the birth of a son, the greater Jonathan Swift, who saw the light in a house in Hoey's Court, Dublin, on November 30, 1667. Swift's infancy was destined to be passed in England. "When he was a year old," says the autobiography, which is written in the third person, "his nurse, who was a woman of Whitehaven, being under an absolute necessity of seeing one of her relations, who was then extremely sick, and from whom she expected a legacy, and being at the same time extremely fond of the infant, she stole him on shipboard unknown to his mother and uncle, and carried him with her to Whitehaven, where he continued for almost three years. For, when the matter was discovered, his mother sent orders by all means not to hazard a second voyage till he could be better able to bear it. The nurse was so careful of him that before he returned he had learned to spell, and by the time he was three years old he could read any chapter in the Bible."

Mrs. Swift's income consisted only of a settlement of £20 a year, and her son's education was due to the charity of his uncle Godwin. Swift was wont to assert in later times that his uncle had treated him like a dog. For any special injustice on Godwin's part it would be

vain to seek. But Swift's haughty nature chafed bitterly at the mere thought of dependence; and, in his autobiography, he declares that he felt the consequence of his parents' improvident marriage, "not only through the whole course of his education, but during the greatest part of his life." At the age of six, Jonathan Swift was sent to the foundation school of the Ormonds, at Kilkenny. After remaining here eight years he proceeded to Trinity College, Dublin, where, with his cousin Thomas, a son of Godwin Swift, he was admitted on April 24, 1682. In dealing with this period of his life, Swift states that, "by the ill-treatment of his nearest relations, he was so discouraged and sunk in his spirits that he too much neglected his academic studies, for some parts of which he had no great relish by nature, and turned himself to reading history and poetry." As a consequence his university career was not a success. In the terminal examination of Easter, 1685, Jonathan Swift, though marked "bene" in Latin and Greek, was stigmatised as "male" in Philosophy, while his Thema, or Latin essay, was only marked "negligenter." He had failed in two out of three subjects, and, to use a modern university phrase, the unfortunate Jonathan was "plucked."

In strict rule Swift should have been stopped of his degree till the ensuing year. But the authorities were inclined to temper justice with mercy, and they allowed him to proceed to his B.A. degree on February 15, 1685, *speciali gratiâ*. This concession, Swift subsequently confessed, was little to his credit. But the results of a university training are to be found elsewhere than in its class lists. That Swift owed the foundation of his great acquirements to Trinity College, Dublin, is an honour of which that institution may be justly proud.

Swift continued to reside in college in order to qualify for

his Mastership of Arts. Up to the taking of his B.A. degree he had lived "with great regularity and observance of the statutes." From that date, however, he began to show a fondness for those minor breaches of the law which tend to enliven the routine of an academic career. On March 18, 1686, Jonathan Swift was publicly censured for notorious neglect of duties and frequenting the town of Dublin late at night, without leave. Many are the fines imposed on him for non-attendance at chapel, and for missing lectures. Lastly, the college register for November 30, 1688, records, in sonorous Latin, that Dominus Swift and some others, for stirring up riots and assailing the junior dean, Dr. Lloyd, with threatening words, are to be suspended from all degrees they have taken or hope to take; and it adds that Dominus Swift and Dominus Sargeant—*quoniam cæteris adhuc intolerabilius se gesserunt*, since they have behaved worse than the others—are to ask pardon of the aforesaid junior dean on bended knee. The first part of the punishment was remitted. From the ignominious apology there seems to have been no escape. But Swift, who was a good hater, nursed his revenge, and in his "Character of Thomas, Earl of Wharton," written many years after, he went out of his way to make Dr. Lloyd the victim of a libel of peculiar atrocity.¹

The Revolution of 1688 was followed by universal confusion in Ireland. Trinity College fell into the hands of the Jacobites. The students were dispersed, and Swift, in sorry plight, came to England and made his way to

¹ For Swift's university career, see John Barrett, "Essay on the Earlier Part of the Life of Swift." It is compiled from the Trinity College records. There is a long discussion on the same point in John Forster's "Life of Swift." Mr. Forster disagrees with Dr. Barrett's conclusions.

Leicester, where his mother had now been for some years settled. Godwin Swift had lost much of his property in foolish speculations, and was no longer able to help his nephew. Another uncle, William Swift, settled in Portugal, called by Swift "the best of my relations," occasionally sent supplies, but these were precarious; and Swift, not liking to be a burden to his mother, was compelled to find some new opening in the world. Mrs. Swift was connected with Lady Temple, and Temple's father, as Master of the Rolls in Ireland, had come into frequent contact with Godwin Swift and the other brothers. It was therefore resolved to send an application to Sir William Temple on Jonathan's behalf. Its result has already been described, and by the end of 1689 Jonathan Swift was domiciled at Moor Park as secretary to Sir William Temple. Swift's duties were to read to his patron, to copy out the rough draught of his memoirs, and to keep accounts. Though not treated with deliberate unkindness, he felt his position keenly. Temple's constant suspicion that the world did not estimate him at his own value had made him the most pompous of men. By his trembling household he was regarded as a demigod. Years afterwards when Swift, as the right-hand man of a great political party, was being treated with deference by princes and ambassadors, he remembered what pain he used to suffer when Sir William Temple would look cold and out of humour for three or four days. He recalled how Temple, on one of his good days, would give his secretary a few shillings to begin with and play at cards with him. "Sir William Temple spoilt a fine gentleman," he used to say; and the enforced subservience to the despot of Moor Park fostered those darker qualities, of which an unhappy childhood had already sown the seeds. Of Lady Temple, the charming Dorothy Osborne, whose

early letters to Sir W. Temple are among the most delightful in seventeenth-century literature, we hear nothing. The household at Moor Park was under the management of Temple's sister, Dame Martha Giffard. She was a notable woman, proud as a German canoness, and with an inborn talent for vindictive hatred, who might have sat for the portrait of Smollett's Tabitha Bramble. But among the inmates of Temple's household was one destined to exert a very different influence on Swift's career. Attached to Lady Giffard, in the capacity of confidential servant, was a certain Mrs. Johnson. The latter, though of humble birth, had been married to a younger son of a good Nottinghamshire family, who had been in Temple's employment, probably as steward. Mr. Johnson had died before Swift's arrival at Moor Park, leaving his widow with two young daughters. Of the younger, Ann, at this time little more than an infant, we hear little. The elder, Esther, had been born in 1681, and was now in her eighth year.¹ She was a dark-eyed little maid, with

¹ The chief authority for Esther Johnson's parentage and character is Swift's own account in the curious paper, "On the Death of Mrs. Johnson." There was, however, a tradition current, then and long after, that Esther Johnson was, in reality, Sir William Temple's natural child. It is referred to at some length in Mr. Deane Swift's life of his great kinsman. Though documentary evidence is lacking, there are strong presumptive grounds for the above belief. *Firstly*: Esther Johnson always occupied an anomalous position in Temple's household. She received an extremely good education; she seems to have moved on almost equal terms with the family and their friends; and she is always spoken of in a very distinct way from her sister Ann; Swift describing the latter as "a good, modest sort of girl." *Secondly*: There is the significant fact that Sir William Temple in his will singled out Esther Johnson for a special and valuable legacy. Yet Temple's fortune barely sufficed to keep up the family dignity, and his other dependants received nothing but the most trifling gifts.

winning ways, and a most lovable disposition. In his hours of idleness the sullen Irish secretary found his way to the child's side, and in the training of her infant mind laid the foundations of an intimacy, the tale of which is the most fascinating in romantic history. When Swift, in later years, thought of his first gloomy residence with Temple, he could always recall with pleasure, that it had enabled him to be "little Stella's first writing-master."

In the spring of 1690, Swift began to suffer from attacks of vertigo and deafness. It was suggested that a return to Ireland might benefit him, and he left Moor Park in May. To Temple, Swift had as yet been a nonentity; and in recommending him to the Irish Secretary, Sir Robert Southwell, he solemnly stated that the future author of the ablest political pamphlet and the most scathing satire in English literature, was honest, diligent, and wrote a good current hand.

Swift failed to obtain any settled position through Southwell's influence, and by the end of 1691 he was back at Moor Park. Swift had now resolved to obtain his Mastership of Arts. He disliked the idea of a return to Trinity College, Dublin. In the summer of 1692, therefore, he went to Oxford, where he was entered at Hart Hall. On showing the certificate of his Dublin B.A. degree he was admitted by the Oxford authorities, *ad eundem*, and on July 5th he took the degree of M.A.^{*} The possession of a full Oxford degree would, under any circumstances, have given him an improved social position. But some inkling of his secretary's abilities had begun to dawn upon Temple, and Swift now began to be entrusted with important business. Temple's diplomatic work in

^{*} Swift seems to have thoroughly enjoyed his visit to Oxford, where he says "he had been obliged in a few weeks to strangers more than in seven years to Dublin College."

Holland had brought him into early connection with William of Orange. After the latter became King of England, as William the Third, he frequently visited Moor Park. On one occasion Mr. Jonathan Swift had the honour of escorting his Majesty round the gardens. The king was much taken with the young secretary's address, showed him how to cut asparagus in the Dutch style, and promised him the royal patronage in his future career. In 1693, Swift was sent, at Temple's suggestion, to point out to the king the impolicy of refusing his assent to the Triennial Act. But William, who had a high idea of his prerogative, refused to listen to Swift's representations; a result which, it would seem from the autobiography, caused the latter much chagrin.

The second residence with Temple is interesting as the period of Swift's first literary efforts. They took the shape of long poems, written in the style of Pindaric odes, which were extremely fashionable at that time.¹ Anything more out of touch with Swift's real bent and capacity it would be impossible to imagine. Three of these effusions have been preserved: an ode to Sancroft, an address to the Athenian Society, and—most heart-rending of all—an address to Sir William Temple.

That great man is represented as warding off, without an effort —

“The wily shafts of state, those jugglers' tricks
Which we call deep designs and politics.”

The fight between Virtue—*i.e.*, the Right Honourable Sir William Temple, baronettus—and the spirit of Evil is thus described:—

¹ They were, however, preceded by a metrical translation of the 18th Ode of Horace's 2nd Book, written at Oxford.

“And though as some ('tis said) for their defence
 Have worn a casement o'er their skin
 So he wore his within,
 Made up of virtue and transparent innocence,
 And though he oft renewed the fight,
 And almost got priority of right,
 He ne'er could overcome her quite,
 In pieces cut, the viper still did reunite.”

Fortunately Swift soon wearied of these super-heroic flights. For the time he continued to write poetry, but in a less ambitious strain.

He produced an ode to King William and an address to his old school and college friend, Congreve the dramatist. But Temple still dominated the horizon. When that great man recovered from an illness in December, 1693, Swift felt called upon to celebrate the event in a torrent of rhymed couplets. While Temple lay in danger, we are told :—

“Joy every face forsook,
 And grief flung sables on each menial look;
 The humble tribe mourned for the quickening soul,
 That furnished spirit and motion through the whole;
 So would earth's face turn pale, and life decay,
 Should Heaven suspend to æt but for a day;
 So nature's crazed convulsions make us dread
 That time is sick, or the world's mind is dead.”

Lady Temple has a special passage to herself :—

“Mild Dorothea, peaceful, wise, and great,
 Trembling beheld the doubtful hand of fate;
 Mild Dorothea, whom we both have long
 Not dared to injure with our lowly song,
 Sprung from a better world, and chosen then
 The best companion for the best of men.”

Even grim Dame Martha, whom Swift in his later

days spoke of as *that old beast*, receives a shower of praise under the melodious name of Dorinda.

It would seem that this last effort exhausted poor Swift's stock of patience. The proffer of the royal patronage had opened out to him a vista of the promised land of independence. He had already made up his mind to enter the Church, and, early in 1694, he began to ask Sir William for some definite promise of support in the clerical profession. But Temple was very disinclined to give Swift his liberty. He asked for time to consider the matter; declared it was impossible to obtain preferment just now; and in general showed himself so adverse to Swift's aspirations, that the latter at length had a violent quarrel with his patron and left for Ireland, resolved to rely on his own efforts. Unfortunately the young man had forgotten an important detail. He applied in due course to the Irish ecclesiastical authorities for ordination; but the latter naturally refused to accede to his request till he could give them the usual certificate as to his good conduct, during the last three years. The only person who could give such a certificate was Temple; and Swift, after a frightful internal struggle, had to swallow his pride and send his patron a humiliating appeal. What anguish such a letter as the following caused to the writer can be well imagined:—

“ DUBLIN, *October 6, 1694.*

“ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR,—. . . The sense I am in, how low I am fallen in your honour's thoughts, has denied me assurance enough to beg this favour, till I find it impossible to avoid; and I entreat your honour to understand that no person is admitted here to a living without some knowledge of his abilities for it. . . . I entreat that your honour will consider this, and will please

to send me some certificate of my behaviour during almost three years in your family ; wherein I shall stand in need of all your goodness to excuse my many weaknesses and oversight, much more to say anything to my advantage. The particulars expected of me are what relate to morals and learning, and the reasons of quitting your honour's family, that is, whether the last was occasioned by any ill actions. They are all left entirely to your honour's mercy, though in the first I think I cannot reproach myself any further than for infirmities. This is all I dare beg at present from your honour, under circumstances of life not worth your regard : what is left me to wish (next to the health and prosperity of your honour and family) is, that Heaven would one day allow me the opportunity of leaving my acknowledgment at your feet for so many favours I have received ; which, whatever effect they have had upon my fortune, shall never fail to have the greatest upon my mind, in approving myself, upon all occasions, your honour's most obedient and most dutiful servant,

“ JONATHAN SWIFT.”

Temple was far too lofty a being to bear malice towards Mr. Secretary Swift, especially when the latter had shown so proper a sense of his base ingratitude. He sent the required certificate. Swift was ordained on October 25, 1694, and on January 28, 1695, he was presented by Lord Capel to the prebend of Kilroot, near Belfast. It was worth about £100 a year.

Swift's first experience of the Irish Church was very short. Kilroot was intensely dull. Excepting an old Trinity chum named Waring, and an Oxford friend, Mr. Winder, Swift could find no society. Though well provided with books he missed Temple's excellent library. Partly in sheer desperation, partly out of that curious

longing to win the heart of any agreeable woman who happened to be much thrown in his society, Swift made furious love to Waring's sister, whom he styled Varina. The following passage from a letter dated April 29, 1696, in which Swift upbraids the lady's coldness, is worthy of the *Grand Cyre* :—

“Surely, Varina, you have but a very mean opinion of the joys that accompany a true, honourable, unlimited love; yet either nature and our ancestors have highly deceived us, or else all other sublunary things are dross in comparison. Is it possible you can be yet insensible to the prospect of a rapture and delight so innocent and so exalted? Trust me, Varina, Heaven has given us nothing else worth the loss of a thought. Ambition, high appearances, friends, and fortunes are all tasteless and insipid when they come in competition. Yet millions of such glorious minutes are we perpetually losing—for ever, irrecoverably losing—to qualify empty forms and wrong notions, and affected coldness and peevish humour. These are the unhappy encumbrances which we who are distinguished from the vulgar do fondly create to torment ourselves. The only felicity permitted to human life we clog with tedious circumstances and barbarous formality.” It may be that the lady doubted the good faith of such hyperbolical proposals. She delayed the desired answer, and the only other extant letter of Swift to her, to be referred to in the next chapter, forms the drop-scene of this curious comedy.

Sir William Temple, with all an old man's dislike to any change in his habits, had soon begun to regret Swift's absence. Lady Temple died in January, 1695, and he felt very lonely now.¹

¹ Lady Temple died about a month after Queen Mary. Lady Giffard declares, with characteristic family pride, that the two had

Letters soon began to arrive at Kilroot, inviting Swift's return. To be a guest where he had formerly been a dependant, seemed to Swift a triumph. To come at Temple's express invitation, would place him in the position of one who grants instead of receiving favours. In May, 1696, therefore, Swift returned to England. He left the charge of Kilroot in the hands of the Oxford friend, Mr. Winder, and by the end of 1697 had formally resigned the living in his favour.

Swift's last residence with Temple was very different to the two preceding. Treated as an honoured guest he was left to order things his own way. Temple saw few visitors, and was often confined to his room by illness. Swift had thus much time thrown on his hands. Most of this he devoted to reading. He took long walks in the neighbourhood, and he drew closer the bond between himself and Esther Johnson, now growing into womanhood. He scribbled on subjects innumerable for his own amusement, and he revised his manuscript of the "Tale of a Tub." In 1697, when the Temples went to London to get a sight of Peter the Great, then on a visit to England, Swift remained behind as master of the house. "I live in great state," he says in a letter of the time, "and the cook comes in to know what I please to have for dinner. I ask very gravely what is in the house, and accordingly give orders for a dish of pigeons, or &c."

But Swift had at last found an opening for his ambition in the political world. The patriotic enthusiasm which had produced the Revolution of 1688 had long since died away, and public life had again fallen back into the usual struggle for place, in which the victory was to the most dexterous or the most compliant. Swift may possibly

been close personal friends, Lady Temple's own death being hastened by grief at her Majesty's.

have once had high ideas of civic virtue. But they had been crushed out by a miserable childhood and a youth of slavery ; and his sole aim was now the attainment, by fair means or foul, of personal distinction. "All my endeavours from a boy," he afterwards confessed to Pope, "were only for want of a great title and fortune, that I might be used like a lord by those who have an opinion of my parts ; whether right or wrong is no great matter." Nothing proves the truth of this statement more than that Swift at this, his entry into the political arena, should have attached himself to Lord Sunderland. The motto of that original genius had been, *Thorough*. When the bill for excluding the Duke of York from the throne was brought forward, he was the most determined of its supporters. When the Duke of York became king as James II., Sunderland promptly went over to the court, was chief agent in the prosecution of the seven bishops, and, to completely win the favour of his royal master, became a Catholic. As soon as James II.'s throne began to totter, Sunderland threw himself heart and soul into the cause of William of Orange ; and in 1697, after a period of diplomatic seclusion, the world learnt with astonishment that this arch-plotter, having won another sovereign's ear, had been made chamberlain of the royal household, sworn of the privy council, and named one of the lords justices who were to administer the government during the king's absence. Of Swift's relations to Sunderland the authorities, unfortunately, give us no information. It is not unnatural that the latter must have gladly availed himself of a supporter whose brilliant abilities later events so amply proved. It is possible, too, that Swift may at this time have taken some part in the pamphlet war that was being waged on the question of standing armies. But Swift's first political adventure was doomed to disap-

pointment. Except for a few kindred spirits, whose sympathy was an insult, Sunderland was utterly alone. Whigs and Tories readily joined together to attack one who was so hopelessly their superior in the baser arts of political warfare. In a few weeks' time the lord chamberlain, warned of a coming motion against him in the House of Commons, resigned. "Lord Sunderland fell," says Swift, with enigmatic brevity, "and I fell with him."

A literary episode fortunately arose at this time to occupy his attention. The French writer Fontenelle had, in an unguarded moment, declared that the writers of the present day surpassed in every respect those of classical times. Fontenelle had long been the standing butt of literary France, and his dictum was greeted with a universal howl. Defenders of the ancients started up on every side. The contest between the rival partisans soon grew so furious that its fame spread across the channel; and the English wits, not to be outdone by their brethren of France, rushed with avidity to arms. Sir William Temple remembered the time when his appearance—*vir pietate gravis*—had stilled the fight between prerogative and liberty. He accordingly put forward a treatise on "Ancient and Modern Learning," which, it was hoped, would drive back the moderns in shame to their entrenchments. But he had yet to learn that men of letters heed not that scriptural maxim which bids a combatant make peace with his adversary quickly. His interference added fuel to the flames. Temple's essay received a prompt answer from the Rev. William Wotton. But this was only a beginning. Temple had, in his pamphlet, declared that the more remote the time, the better the authors. Æsop and Phalaris were, according to him, the earliest of known authors. What fables were more delightful than those of Æsop? What letters so brilliant as those of Phalaris?

Encouraged by Temple's dictum, the Hon. Charles Boyle, of Christ Church, Oxford, published a new edition of the "Letters of Phalaris." The preface to Boyle's work contained an ironical reflection on Dr. Bentley, the greatest classical scholar of the day, afterwards master of Trinity College, Cambridge, but at that time keeper of the royal library in St. James's Palace. The latter promptly rushed into the fray on the side of the moderns. He proved that the so-called letters of Phalaris were a clumsy forgery of later times, and overwhelmed Temple, Boyle, and all their following, with a torrent of sarcastic ridicule. An answer from Boyle and a rejoinder from Bentley soon appeared, till to the contest there seemed to be no end. It was now that Swift wrote his "Battle of the Books," or, to give the work its full title, "A Full and True Account of the Battle Fought last Friday Between the Ancient and the Modern Books in St. James's Library." Though Swift, for Temple's sake, supports the cause of the ancients, the pamphlet is far more a satire than a polemic.

The moderns in this celebrated battle begin by boasting of their originality—a claim scornfully derided by the ancients, and, after much mutual reviling, ancients and moderns confront one another in hostile array. The attention of the opposing forces is however suddenly drawn off by a dispute between a spider and a bee. Æsop, on behalf of the ancients, points to this as typical of the present wrangle. The spider has boasted of her web, all built with her own hands and from materials extracted out of her own person, while the bee is a freebooter over fields and gardens, and a universal plunderer of nature. The bee in answer laughs at the filthy cobweb, which is the only result of the spider's toil, and glories in the fact that his own goods are sought for from every corner of the

world. Æsop gaily applies the fable, *mutato nomine*. The moderns, with all their boasted originality, says he, produce, like the spider, nothing but dirt and poison. The ancients, like the bee, acknowledge their indebtedness to the world in general, and just as the bee fills his hive with honey and wax, so we, says Æsop, furnish mankind with the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light. This taunt rouses the moderns to frenzy, and war is declared.

Great interest is taken in its fortunes by the Olympian deities. Momus, god of laughter, resolves to champion the moderns, and goes to seek aid of the goddess of criticism. The description of this malignant demon is the gem of the whole pamphlet. She is discovered on the top of a snowy mountain in Nova Zembla, extended upon the spoils of numerous volumes, half devoured. Around, are her father and mother, Ignorance and Pride; her sister, Opinion; and her children, Noise, Impudence, Dulness, Vanity, Positiveness, Pedantry, and Ill-manners. "It is I," she says, "who give wisdom to infants and idiots; by me children grow wiser than their parents, by me beaux become politicians, and schoolboys judges of philosophy; by me sophisters debate and conclude upon the depths of knowledge; and coffee-house wits, instinct by me, can correct an author's style, and display his minutest errors, without understanding a syllable of his matter or of his language." The goddess, in answer to Momus, tells various members of her family to attend the leaders of the moderns; and the battle, which is described in true Homeric style, now begins. The great heroes of classical literature, Homer, Pindar, and Virgil, perform prodigies of valour, and bear down all before them. Temple, as general of a select band of moderns allied to the ancients, shows a vigour worthy of his cause. Bentley, whose uncouth scurrility has rendered him odious

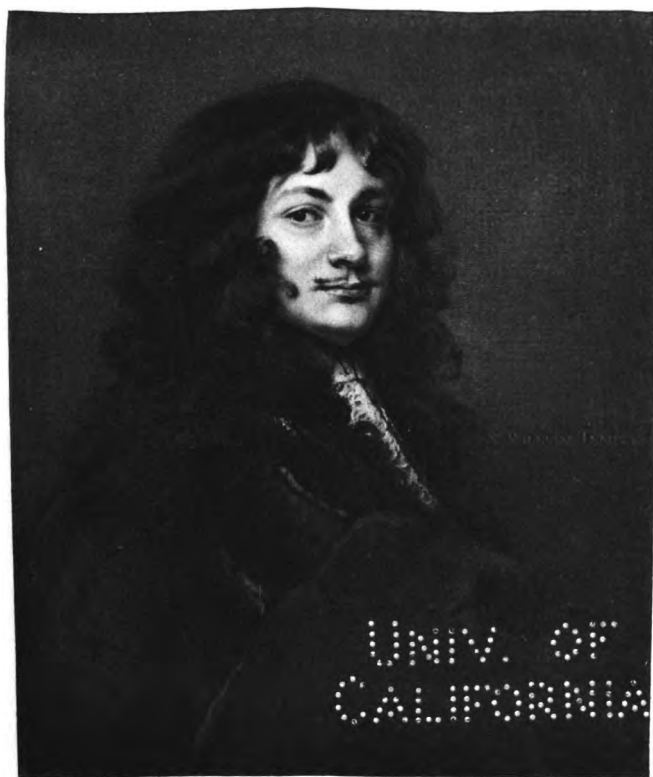


Mary Anne Temple

John Swift and his Writings.

John Swift applies the fable, *mutato nomine*. The moderns, who have boasted originality, says he, produce, like the bee, nothing but dirt and poison. The ancients, by their knowledge their indebtedness to the world in general, and just as the bee fills his hive with honey for his fellows, says Hesiod, furnish mankind with the two necessary things, wisdom and sweetness and light. This conduct of the moderns to frenzy, and war is declared.

When the satyr is taken in its fortunes by the Olympian deities, Mercury, god of laughter, resolves to champion the moderns, and goes to seek aid of the goddess of discord. The description of this malignant demon is the subject of the whole pamphlet. She is discovered on the top of a snowy mountain in Nova Zembla, extended on the ground, surrounded by numerous vipers, half devoured. Amongst her father and mother, Ignorance and Pride; her sister, Opinion; and her children, Noise, Impudence, Dulness, Vanity, Positiveness, Peasantry, and Ill-manners. "It is I," she says, "who give wisdom to infants and idiots; by me children grow wiser than their parents, by me beaux become politicians, and schoolboys judges of philosophy; by me sophisters debate and conclude upon the depths of knowledge; and coffee-house wits, instructed by me, can correct an author's style, and display his minutest errors, without understanding a syllable of his matter or of his language." The goddess, in answer to Momus, tells various members of her family to attend the leaders of the moderns; and the battle, which is described in true Homeric style, now begins. The great heroes of classical literature, Homer, Pindar, and Virgil, perform feats of valour, and bear down all before them. Momus, as general of a select band of moderns allied to the ancients, shows a vigour worthy of his cause. His own want of uncouth scurrility has rendered him odious



Sir W. Temple. pinax.

Dawson. ph. sc.

Sir William Temple.

TO VISIT
ALABAMA

even to his friends, sneaks up to the ancients' camp at nightfall and steals the armour of Phalaris and Æsop. Wotton, on a similar intention bent, throws a lance at Temple's sleeping form; but the latter's henchman, Boyle, promptly avenges the outrage on his master. "As a young lion . . . if chance a wild ass, with brayings importune, affront his ear, the generous beast, though loathing to distain his claws with blood so vile, yet much provoked by the offensive noise . . . hunts the noisy long-ear'd animal. So Wotton fled, so Boyle pursued." In vain Bentley comes to Wotton's aid. Boyle's fury grows the greater, and he hurls his lance with such tremendous force that Wotton and Bentley are transfixed at one fell blow. "As when a skilful cook has trussed a brace of woodcocks, he with one iron skewer pierces the tender sides of both, their legs and wings close pinioned to the ribs; so was this pair of friends transfixed, till down they fell, joined in their lives, joined in their deaths; so closely joined that Charon would mistake them both for one, and waft them over Styx for half his fare."

With the "Battle of the Books" Swift's last residence at Moor Park came to an end. Sir William Temple had long been sinking under a complication of diseases, and he died on January 27, 1699. Swift had thoroughly enjoyed his last stay at Moor Park, and it is not unlikely that, during the last illness, Temple's better qualities alone had shown themselves, and that Swift's last memories of his patron were not unkindly. To Esther Johnson Temple's will left some land at Monistown, in the county of Wicklow, Ireland. To Swift Temple bequeathed a legacy of £100, and "the care, trust, and advantage of publishing his posthumous writings." The latter eventually appeared in five volumes. From their publication, which extended over ten years, Swift seems

to have derived a small profit.¹ But the task, which entailed much rearrangement and revision, was extremely irksome, and, moreover, involved Swift in long and bitter disputes with Lady Giffard.

¹ From Swift's papers it appears that for the third part of Temple's Memoirs he received £40. There is no evidence to show what his gains were from the other four parts.

CHAPTER II.

AN ALLY OF THE WHIGS.

Effect of circumstances on Swift's character—His position on Temple's death—Goes to Ireland as chaplain to Lord Berkeley—His various disappointments—Obtains livings of Laracor, Agher, and Rathbeggan; and the prebend of Dunlaven—His life at Dublin Castle—"Meditation on a Broomstick"—"Petition of Mrs. Harris on the loss of her purse"—Swift settles at Laracor—His life there—Varina—Goes to London—"The Dissensions in Athens and Rome"—Swift intimate with the Whig leaders—The Act against Occasional Conformity—Settlement of Stella and Mrs. Dingley in Ireland—The Tisdall episode—The "Tale of a Tub"—Effects of this work—Toleration policy of the Whigs—Swift wavers in his allegiance to them—Comes to England in November, 1707, to obtain first-fruits for Irish Church.

WITH the death of Sir William Temple the first part of Swift's career comes to an end. Henceforward he is his own master, and the steps he takes are of his own deliberate choice. The preceding chapter has explained how great an influence the events of his education and early manhood had upon his character and aims. We have shown how the germ of pride, implanted in him by nature, was fostered by circumstances till it became a domineering passion. In the succeeding chapters we shall show the variations of this feeling, during the stress of early struggles, till its triumph in the very highest fields of social and political success; and we shall trace its gradual

degeneration into cynicism, isolation, and misanthropy during the long years of an enforced and gloomy retirement. With this we have to chronicle the achievements of an active career, and to analyse the products of an original and fertile genius.

The death of his patron left Swift completely stranded. He had resigned his Irish living, and he had as yet failed to obtain a fixed position as a writer or politician. His first step, says the autobiography, was to go to London and apply by petition to King William, who, it seems, had promised Sir William Temple to give Swift a prebend of Canterbury or Westminster. The Earl of Romney, a brother of the ill-fated Algernon Sidney, who was now in great favour at court, engaged to second the petition. Romney, a trifler and a debauchee, however, took no trouble in the matter; and "Mr. Swift, having totally relied on this lord's honour, and having neglected to use any instrument of reminding his Majesty of the promise made to Sir William Temple, after long attendance in vain, thought it better to comply with an invitation given him by the Earl of Berkeley to attend him to Ireland as his chaplain and private secretary; his lordship having been appointed one of the lords justices of that kingdom, with the Duke of Bolton and the Earl of Galway, on June 29, 1699. He attended his lordship, who landed near Waterford; and Mr. Swift acted as secretary the whole journey to Dublin. But another person had so far insinuated himself into the earl's favour by telling him that the post of secretary was not proper for a clergyman, nor would be of any advantage to one who aimed only at church preferments, that his lordship, after a poor apology, gave that office to the other." There were other disappointments in store; and Swift, who was furious when his claims were disregarded, comments upon them with great

bitterness. Just at this time the deanery of Derry fell vacant. Its disposal was entrusted to Lord Berkeley, and Swift confidently expected to obtain it. But the unscrupulous secretary, "having received a bribe," persuaded his lordship to give the prize to Dr. Theophilus Bolton. The lord justice told Swift he was too young for a deanery, and put him off with the rectory of Agher, and the vicarage of Laracor and Rathbeggan in Meath. They were worth about £200 a year altogether—"not a third part of the deanery of Derry," Swift indignantly remarks. In the following year, September, 1700, the Archbishop of Dublin conferred upon him the prebend of Dunlaven in the cathedral of St. Patrick's. But this slight addition does not seem to have put Swift in a better humour. However, Lord Berkeley would have been far too great a man to quarrel with; Swift concealed his disappointment as well as he could, and settled down to his duties as chaplain at Dublin Castle.

He thoroughly enjoyed a position in which his peculiar talent for the first time had full play. Of Lord Berkeley himself we hear little. Lady Berkeley, who had what would now be called strong Evangelical inclinations, was much attached to devotional books of the vapid type. Swift, part of whose duties was to read these productions to her ladyship, was one day instructed to take up a work which he held in especial horror—Boyle's *Meditations*. To revenge himself he, therefore, substituted for one of the passages in the text an invention of his own, entitled, "A Meditation upon a Broomstick," from which the following is extracted:—

"This single stick, which you now behold ingloriously lying in that neglected corner, I once knew in a flourishing state in a forest: it was full of sap, full of leaves, and full of boughs; but now in vain does the busy art of man

pretend to vie with nature, by tying that withered bundle of twigs to its sapless trunk. . . . When I beheld this I sighed and said within myself, '*Surely man is a broomstick!*' Nature sent him into the world strong and lusty, in a thriving condition, wearing his own hair on his head, the proper branches of this reasoning vegetable, until the axe of intemperance has lopped off his green boughs, and left them a withered trunk; he then flies to art and puts on a periwig, valuing himself upon an unnatural bundle of hairs (all covered with powder) that never grew on his head. . . .'

"But a broomstick, perhaps you will say, is an emblem of a tree standing on its head; and pray what is man but a topsy-turvy creature, his animal faculties perpetually mounted on his rational, his head where his heels should be, grovelling on the earth? And yet, with all his faults, he sets up to be a universal reformer and corrector of abuses, a remover of grievances, rakes into every slut's corner of nature, bringing hidden corruptions to the light, and raises a mighty dust where there was none before; sharing deeply all the while in the very same pollutions he pretends to sweep away; his last days are spent in slavery to women, and generally the least deserving; till, worn out to the stumps, like his brother besom, he is either kicked out of doors, or made use of to kindle flames for others to warm themselves by."

Lady Berkeley, who, like all persons of her stamp, had no sense of humour, derived great consolation from the above masterpiece.

With Lord Berkeley's daughters, the Ladies Betty, Mary, and Penelope, Swift was a great favourite—the first of them remaining his friend and correspondent through life. They completely submitted to his autocratic ways, in return for which he regaled them with a rich flow of

merriment and wit. As Lady Betty expressed it in a doggerel rhyme, tacked on to some verses of Swift's own, describing a card-party at the castle :—

“With these is parson Swift,
Not knowing how to spend his time,
Does make a wretched shift,
To deafen them with puns and rhyme.”

Of the latter the best which has survived is “The Petition of Mrs. Frances Harris.” One of the servants having lost her purse raises the whole castle with her lamentations. All the other domestics are put under examination.

Says Cary, says he, “I have been a servant this five-and-twenty years come spring,
And in all the places I lived I never heard of such a thing.”
“Yes,” says the steward, “I remember when I was at my Lord Shrewsbury's,
Such a thing as this happened just about the time of gooseberries.”

Miss Frances taxes the wife of a footman with having taken it.

“The devil take me !” said she (blessing herself), “if ever I saw't !”
So she roared like a bedlam, as though I had called her all to naught.
So you know what could I say to her any more ?
I e'en left her and came away as wise as I was before.

At last Miss Harris applies to parson Swift for assistance in her search.

“Parson,” said I, “can you cast a *nativity* when a body's plundered ?”
(Now you must know he hates to be called *parson*, like the *devil* !)
“Truly,” says he, “Mrs. Nab, it might become you to be more civil ;
If your money be gone, as a learned divine says, d'ye see,
You are no *text* for my handling ; so take that from me :
I was never taken for a *conjurer* before, I'd have you to know.”

Eventually Lord Berkeley quiets the complainant by an ample present.

The poem is an instance of Swift's lightest and most humorous manner; it has special interest, moreover, owing to the insight it shows into the character of servants—a line subsequently developed by Swift in his "Advice to Servants."

Some months after Swift's appointment to the living of Laracor he went down to take possession. It was situated in the county of Meath, about a mile and a half from the town of Trim. Swift arrived to find an ill-kept church, and a dilapidated parsonage. His first duty was to repair the one and rebuild the other. He laid out a garden, in which he imitated the Dutch tulip beds, straight canal, and quaint lines of willows which he remembered at Moor Park. As time went on he increased the amount of glebe, and endowed the parish with additional tithes purchased at his own cost. Regarding his spiritual work there are few details. Traditions regarding the eccentricities of himself and his clerk, Roger Coxe, subsequently grew up. But they are as authentic as the epigrams which have been attributed to Talleyrand, or the puns which have been fathered on Sydney Smith. In a letter to Archbishop King Swift speaks with sarcastic indifference of his "audiences of half a score"; and it may be safely concluded that Swift, like most of the Irish churchmen of this time, was not actuated by strong missionary zeal. His ambition was political, not religious; and his heart was far more set upon shaping the conduct of English statesmen than on saving the souls of a few Leinster peasantry.

It was during this settlement at Laracor that his first love affair came to a termination. Reference has already been made to Miss Waring, the Varina whose fascinations had attracted Swift's attention at Kilroot. That lady had heard of the improvement made in Swift's position

by his chaplaincy at Dublin Castle, and his living of Laracor. He had already offered her his heart, which it would seem, from the scanty evidence extant, had been accepted. When, however, she now pressed him to fulfil his promise, Swift began to draw back. A strange aversion to marriage, due partly to physical reasons, but more, we believe, to an overpowering sense of moral and intellectual isolation, had been upon him ever since he came to man's estate; and the letter he now wrote to Miss Waring indicates a resolve to rid himself at all costs of an embarrassing intimacy.¹

Swift began with a long string of explanations and excuses. He expresses much concern at the lady's ill health, and trusts that nothing on his part is to blame for it. He thought that a full and clear statement of his position had been already made, but as she is not yet satisfied, he will answer her last letter, point by point. She has expressed some surprise at the altered style of his letters since his return to Ireland. This is not due, as she insinuates, to the fact of his having found another love. But he has tried to get her "from the company and place she is now in." Her present circle of friends is unworthy of her and hateful to himself, and seeing that she is possessed of means, she might have acquiesced in his suggestions and removed elsewhere. She must hold him in very slight regard to pay no attention to his requests. Her uncle Adam has been interfering in the matter. He has asked for a categorical statement of Swift's intentions, on the ground that the present condition of uncertainty was doing Miss Waring considerable harm. But Swift declares he has no wish to tie the lady down to a hard and fast engagement. His living of

¹ The letter is dated Dublin, May 4, 1700.

Laracor is a dismal place, and as yet unfit to live in. He must either hire a house at Trim, which would be very inconvenient, or build one for himself on the ground, which would be too costly. However, if she is willing to overlook all possible difficulties, he has no objection to a definite arrangement. The letter ends as follows:—

“Are you in a condition to manage domestic affairs, with an income of less (perhaps) than £300[†] a year? Have you such an inclination to my person and humour as to comply with my desires and way of living, and endeavour to make us both as happy as you can? Will you be ready to engage in those methods I shall direct for the improvement of your mind, so as to make us entertaining company for each other, without being miserable when we are neither visiting nor visited? Can you bend your love and esteem and indifference to others the same way as I do mine? Shall I have so much power in your heart, or you so much government of your passions, as to grow in good humour upon my approach? Have you so much good nature as to endeavour by soft words to smooth any rugged humour occasioned by the cross accidents of life? Shall the place wherever your husband is thrown be more welcome than courts or cities without him? In short, these are some of the necessary methods to please men who, like me, are deep-read in the world; and to a person thus made I should be proud in giving all due returns towards making her happy. These are the questions I have always resolved to propose to her with whom I meant to pass my life; and whenever you can heartily answer them in the affirmative, I shall be blessed to have you in my arms,

[†] Mr. Forster, after careful calculation, estimates the value of Swift's livings, Dunlaven included, at £230 a year. Miss Waring had £100 a year “to her fortune.”

without regarding whether your person be beautiful or your fortune large. *Cleanliness in the first, and competency in the other, is all I look for.*"

The studied insults of the letter, which the reader will do well to compare with the one quoted in the last chapter, had the desired result. Henceforth Swift passed out of Varina's life.

On February 16, 1701, Swift took his degree of Doctor of Divinity at Trinity College, Dublin, and in the April following he went with the Berkeley family to England. He found the political world in a state of extraordinary agitation. William of Orange had been gradually becoming more and more unpopular. Not merely the Tories, who had only accepted the Revolution as a necessary evil, but the moderate Whigs also were beginning to turn against him. His desire for a standing army, his frequent exercise of the royal veto, his exaggerated interest in foreign affairs, the management of which, moreover, he kept strictly in his own hands, and, most of all, his predilection for Dutch favourites, had raised him up a host of enemies. The parliament chosen in February, 1701, showed itself bitterly hostile. Though a French prince had just acquired the whole of the old Spanish dominions, they refused to show the slightest sympathy with William's fears of French aggression. At length the Commons decided to formally impeach the leaders of the Whig party and the king's most trusted servants—Lords Somers, Halifax, Orford, and Portland. Swift's political inclinations were at this time strongly Whig. He disliked fanaticism in politics as much as in religion; and he hoped to reap some reward by standing forward on behalf of the king and his ministers at this juncture. He therefore wrote and published his first political tract, "The Dissensions in Athens and Rome, and the Consequences they had upon both these States."

Real liberty, says Swift, in this pamphlet, depends on the maintenance of a balance of strength between the different powers in the state. In England these powers are the Crown, the aristocracy, and the House of Commons. If one of them acquire an undue preponderance, liberty is at an end. For a tyranny of the many is just as baneful as the tyranny of one. He criticises the pertinacious way in which the English Commons have sought to usurp functions which by usage and natural justice belong to the other two estates; and, referring to the attack on the Whig leaders, he shows what injustice may be done by the constant cry for impeachment. To illustrate his contention he gives a long and detailed account of several cases where the Athenian democracy made accusations against prominent statesmen. Under the latter the names of the Whig leaders are thinly veiled. Thus Aristides is meant for Somers, Themistocles for Admiral Russell, Pericles for Halifax, and Phocion for the Earl of Portland. Similar illustrations are given from Roman history. If, then, Swift concludes, these ancient assemblies were always in the wrong, is it not possible that the English Commons may be in the wrong to-day? Moreover, he goes on to prove, such conduct has always defeated its own ends. The Athenian democracy, by frightening able men from the public service, was at length compelled to yield without a struggle to Alexander of Macedon. The triumph of the plebs in Rome, by producing anarchy, paved the way for the establishment of the empire. Let England take warning lest, through following a similar course, she incur a similar doom.

The pamphlet, whose classical parallels smell of the lamp, shows great knowledge of history, and is a valuable contribution to political science. But it has no brilliancy of style.

It is interesting, however, to note in it a statement of Swift's dislike to that great popular fetish, party government. The utter destruction of all individuality which this system entails naturally rendered it odious to his commanding intellect. He says: "I would be glad if any partisan would help me to a tolerable reason, that, because Bibulus, the party man, is persuaded that Clodius and Curio do really propose the good of their country as their chief end, therefore Bibulus shall be wholly guided and governed by them in the means and measures towards it. Is it enough for Bibulus and the rest of the herd to say, without further examining, I am of the side with Clodius, or I vote with Curio? Are these proper methods to form and make up what they think fit to call the united wisdom of the nation? Is it not possible that upon some occasion Clodius may be bold and insolent, borne away by his passion, malicious and revengeful? That Curio may be corrupt, and expose to sale his tongue or his pen?" The pamphlet shows, moreover, that Swift, like most statesmen, did not believe in the maxim, *Vox populi, vox Dei*. Unlike most statesmen, however, he was not afraid to say so. He refers in terms of real regret to a recent act against bribery at parliamentary elections. According to him, its only result would be to bring an equally unprincipled and far more dangerous type of men into public life. "Whoever practices upon the weakness and vanity of the people is guilty of an immoral action, as much as if he did it upon their avarice . . . as long as men engage in the public service upon private ends it will be safer to trust our property and constitution in the hands of such who have paid for their election, than of those who have obtained it by servile flatteries of the people."

The pamphlet was extensively read and made a very

favourable impression. On September 16th, moreover, the recognition of the elder Pretender as King of England by Louis XIV., created a tremendous reaction in favour of King William. The voice of detraction was hushed. The Whig leaders became heroes instead of criminals; and a new parliament, meeting on December 31, 1701, overwhelmed William with loyal protestations. His unexpected death on March 8, 1702, unfortunately prevented him from enjoying the benefits of this great political change.

Swift, who had gone to Ireland in September, 1701, returned to England in April, 1702. He revealed the authorship of his pamphlet, and was at once taken into high favour by the Whig leaders. "Lords Somers and Halifax," he remarks with evident pride, "desired my acquaintance, with great marks of esteem and professions of kindness—not to mention the Earl of Sunderland, who had been my old acquaintance. They lamented that they were not able to serve me since the death of the king, and were very liberal in promising me the greatest preferments I could hope for, if ever it came in their power. I soon grew domestic with Lord Halifax, and was as often with Lord Somers as the formality of his nature (the only unconvertible fault he had) made it agreeable to me."^{*} The above passage, which forms part of an indirect apology for his future conduct, is very significant. It is evident from the last two sentences that the Whigs, though glad of Swift's support, were more lavish in promises than in rewards, and that he was not altogether pleased with Lord Somers' personal bearing towards him. A later passage from this same work shows a distinct ground of difference between himself and the Whigs.

^{*} See, for this, Swift's tract entitled, "Memoirs relating to the change in Queen Anne's Ministry in 1710."

Having entered the Church, Swift was determined to the utmost of his abilities to maintain its power and independence. In this feeling of his the Whig leaders declined to share.

This want of perfect sympathy between Swift and the Whigs probably accounts for his small exertions on their behalf during the next few years. The ministry at Anne's accession started with a strong Tory infusion. But as the war against France continued, the Whigs, deriving great credit from Marlborough's victories, began to gather strength. No one at this time could hold a civil or municipal office without having taken the sacrament according to the uses of the Church of England. It became customary for many Dissenters to qualify themselves for these posts by taking the sacrament as the law directed once a year, after which they continued attendance at their own chapels. The High Church section of the Tory party, headed by Henry St. John, wished to put a stop to this practice, and introduced a bill against "occasional conformity." The bill passed the Commons twice in 1703; but on each occasion, by the influence of the Government, it was stopped in the Lords. There is an amusing account of the public excitement thereat in a letter of Swift to Dr. Tisdall¹:—

"I wish you had been here for ten days, during the highest and warmest reign of party and faction that I ever knew or read of, upon the bill against occasional conformity. . . . It was so universal that I observed the dogs in the street much more contumelious and quarrelsome than usual; and the very night before the bill went up (to the Lords), a committee of Whig and Tory cats had a very warm and loud debate upon the roof of our house.

¹ Dated London, December 16, 1703

But why should we wonder at that, when the very ladies are split asunder into High Church and Low, and, out of zeal for religion, have hardly time to say their prayers!"

Though Swift was on the side of the Whigs at present, his opposition to the bill was very slight; and as time passed on his allegiance to the Whigs became gradually fainter.

An important addition had now been made to the society of Laracor. Swift's intimacy with Esther Johnson (Stella) had only become closer on Temple's death. Shortly after that event Stella's mother, Mrs. Johnson, had married Mr. Moser, the late Sir William Temple's steward. Possibly owing to this it became advisable for Stella to seek a new home; and Swift now suggested that she and Mrs. Dingley, her companion, should settle near him in Ireland. The offer was accepted, and in the summer of 1701 the two women came over to Laracor. When Swift was absent in England, they lived at the parsonage; when he was in Ireland they took lodgings in the neighbourhood. Swift knew the world, and was careful to avoid giving rise to scandal. For Stella herself the die was cast. Thenceforth, till her death, she remained bound to Swift. The intimacy formed with the child at Moor Park had become part of his life; and in the dark years that followed after his political career was ended, Stella was the one bright spot which lightened his lonely path. In the year 1704 he was near losing her. His friend Dr. Tisdall, incumbent of a small Dublin parish, but a Belfast man by birth, seems to have spent much time at Laracor during Swift's absences in England. Introduced by Swift to Stella he soon began to make advances to the dark-eyed English girl. How these advances were received will never be known. From the single letter remaining on the

subject it would seem that Tisdall accused Swift of prejudicing Stella against him. This Swift categorically denied. He acknowledged, regarding Stella, that "if my fortunes and humour served me to think of that state (marriage), I should certainly, among all persons on earth, make your choice; because I never saw that person whose conversation I entirely valued but hers." But he declared that no feelings of his own would allow him to try and influence Stella's decision. Tisdall's suit was not successful. More than this our authorities do not tell us. Stella was content to let her destiny rest in Swift's hands.

In the spring of 1704 Swift published anonymously his "Tale of a Tub."¹ It had been written as early as 1697. To it was appended the "Battle of the Books," the manuscript of which had up till now been only handed about among Temple's friends. The "Tale of a Tub" was dedicated "to the worthiest"—*detur dignissimo*. This is interpreted, in the so-called Bookseller's-Dedication, as equivalent to Lord Somers. For every one of whom the bookseller had made inquiry, though convinced that he himself was the worthiest, had always mentioned Somers second; and it was a maxim "that those to whom everybody allows the second place, have an undoubted title to the first!"

The best-known part of this extraordinary work consists of a satirical account, in allegorical form, of the origin, development, and divisions of the Christian Church. Once upon a time, Swift begins, there was a man who had three

¹ The phrase "Tale of a Tub" is derived from the sailor's habit of throwing a tub overboard so as to distract the attention from their ship of an infuriated whale. Thus the object of Swift's book is to occupy those would-be wits and crazy fanatics whose folly was ruining learning, morals, and religion,

sons by one wife, and all at a birth ; nor could it ever be told which was the eldest. The father, dying early, bequeaths to each of them a wonderful new coat (the Christian religion). With good wearing the coats will last fresh and sound for ever. Full instructions, moreover, concerning the management of the coats will be found in the old man's will (the Bible). For the first seven years after their father's death (the first seven centuries of Christianity), the brothers carefully observe his directions, and keep the coats in good order. But, being now arrived at man's estate, they come up to town to show their qualifications. They have not been settled here long before they fall in love with three ladies : the Duchesse d'Argent, Madame de Grands Titres, and the Comtesse d'Orgueil (covetousness, ambition, and pride). These ladies are of high rank and great estate, and will not even look at the three brothers while the latter continue to wear their plain, formal coats. After a time, moreover, a fashion arises in town of wearing great shoulder-knots. The brothers, resisting the novelty, are now laughed at wherever they go. But there seems no hope for them, since their father's will forbids them to make any change in the coats by recutting, addition, or diminution. At length, one of the brothers, who was reputed a much better scholar than the other two, discovers a way out of the difficulty. Their father's will, says he, like all legal documents, is very obscure. Perhaps, therefore, on careful examination of its language, they may actually find some authority empowering them to assume the shoulder-knots. The will is accordingly brought out. To the delight of his two other brothers, the scholar discovers, scattered about on different pages, the letters S. H. O. U. L. D. E. R. It is true these letters form part of ordinary words ; this, however, the scholar maintains, is of no consequence. They cannot find the letter

“K”; but this the scholar points out is the same as “C,” which may be found on every page. The few letters still required are soon made up; the brothers gladly sew shoulder-knots on to their coats, and are at once received into polite society. Fashions in clothes change rapidly, but the wise brother always discovers some excuse for their adoption. When gold lace comes into vogue: “Brothers,” says he, “if you remember, we heard a fellow say, when we were boys, that he heard my father’s man say that he heard my father say that he would advise his sons to get gold lace on their coats as soon as ever they could procure money to buy it.” The other two brothers remember this perfectly well. “And so without more ado they got the largest gold lace in the parish, and walked about as fine as lords.” Next comes a rage for flame-coloured satin for linings. The scholar produces a slip of paper, “written by a dog-keeper of my grandfather’s,” which talks, as luck would have it, of flame-coloured satin. He tacks it on to the will as a codicil. No codicil is valid unless annexed to a will. No will, therefore, says this sage logician, can be valid unless it has a codicil annexed to it! Soon silver fringes come into fashion. The wearing of these, alas! is on examination found to be forbidden in the will under the most terrific penalties. But this obstacle is soon surmounted by the learned one. He discovers that “the same word which in the will is called fringe does also signify a broomstick; and doubtless ought to have the same interpretation in this paragraph.” In fact, every new fashion, from embroidery to silver tags, is found, after examination of the text, to be allowed by the old man’s will. At last the will itself is put aside and locked up. New fashions are simply adopted without hesitation as soon as they come up; and in the end the brothers’ plain coats become so ornamented, embroidered,

and bedizened, that their father would never have recognised them.¹

The learned brother obtains great fame owing to his clever interpretation of the will. A certain lord (Constantine the Great), therefore takes him into his family as tutor. But when the lord dies the tutor forges a deed of conveyance of the house and lands to himself, turns out the young squires, and receives his brothers in their stead (establishment of the temporal power).

With the acquisition of this estate the successful schemer, who has taken the name of Peter and the style of eldest brother, enters upon a great career. He assumes numerous titles, invents quack medicines, runs puppet shows, and gulls people into believing the most monstrous fables. Strangest of all, he sells pardons to condemned criminals in Newgate; who, poor wretches, since the king alone can pardon them, lose their lives and their money too. At last Peter's brothers grow ashamed of him. This feeling is changed into anger when, in imitation of his own example, he makes them turn their wives into the street, locks the cellar door and puts the key in his pocket (the communion in one kind), and curses them most terribly if they try and argue with him.

The two younger brothers at last determine to run away; "but first," says the tale, "they humbly desired a copy of their father's will, which had now lain neglected time out of mind. Instead of granting this request Peter called them rogues, traitors, and all the rest of the vile names he could muster up. However, while he was abroad one day upon his projects, the two youngsters watched their opportunity,

¹ The above passage refers to the additions gradually engrafted on Biblical Christianity; thus flame-coloured satin is intended for the doctrine of purgatory. The Catholic will regard these changes as authorised developments; the Protestant as corruptions.

made a shift to come at the will, and took a copy of it, by which they saw how grossly they had been abused ; their father having left them equal heirs, and strictly commanded that whatever they got should lie in common between them." Encouraged by this they break open the cellar door, comfort themselves with a glass of wine, and send for their wives. " While all this was in agitation," the tale goes on, " there enters a solicitor from Newgate desiring Lord Peter would please procure a pardon for a thief that was to be hanged to-morrow. But the two brothers told him he was a coxcomb to seek pardon from a fellow who deserved to be hanged much better than his client and discovered all the method of that imposture, advising the solicitor to put his friend upon obtaining a pardon from the king. In the midst of all this clutter and revolution, in comes Peter with a file of dragoons at his heels, and gathering from all hands what was in the wind, he and his gang, after several millions of scurrilities and curses, by main force very fairly kicked them both out of doors, and would never let them come under his roof from that day to this." ¹

The first step of the two ejected brothers is to take the names of Martin and Jack. They then set to work to bring back their coats into strict accordance with the regulations of their father's will. But here a difference arises between them. Martin pulls off the lace and fringes ; but he notices that much of the embroidery is so carefully sewn in, that to cut it all out will ruin the coat. He therefore resolves to let some of it remain. Brother Jack, who is very hot-tempered, tears away at his coat with such fury that the garment is rent from

¹ The reference is to the outbreak of the Reformation in Germany ; "Martin" and "Jack" are derived from Martin Luther and John Calvin.

top to toe, whole pieces of the cloth are in many cases torn away, while in certain places fag ends of Peter's old livery still hang on unnoticed. Martin remonstrates, but Jack refuses to listen. He accuses Martin of still hankering after Peter's gew-gaws, renounces his society, and goes his way alone (separation of the Puritans from the Anglican Church). The rest of the allegory which is a little tedious, deals mainly with the history of religion in England after the Reformation. Swift's hatred of the Dissenters is markedly displayed. He dilates on their affected differences from other men; on their habit of cant; on their dislike to Church music; and on their defacement, during the Commonwealth, of the statues and paintings in English churches.

"In winter he (Jack) went always loose and unbuttoned and clad as thin as possible to let in the ambient heat, and in summer lapped himself close and thick to keep it out.

"He was troubled with a disease reverse to that called the stinging of the tarantula, and would run dog-mad at the noise of music, especially a bagpipe.

"He was a person that feared no colours, but mortally hated all, and upon that account bore a cruel aversion against all painters, insomuch that, in his paroxysms, as he walked the streets, he would have his pockets laden with stones to pelt at the signs."

The above amusing allegory only occupies a few sections of the work styled "A Tale of a Tub." In the remainder, Swift hurls the shafts of his ridicule at the folly of strugglers for fame, at the pretensions of coffee-house wits, and at the shallowness of Grub Street critics. No foible of human nature is left untouched. The work lacks the tremendous power of Swift's later writings, though in the scope and variety of its satire it excels

them. The mass of ideas, moreover, to which the author seeks to give expression, notably in the so-called digressions, has produced great obscurity of style; and to reach the vein of meaning his reader has to dig through a close-set stratum of subtle irony and involved allusion.

The most remarkable passage is that which treats of a philosophy of clothes. It has special interest as containing the germ of an idea developed by Carlyle in his "Sartor Resartus." Swift describes for us a sect whose tenets obtained at the time when Peter, Martin, and Jack first came to town. "They worshipped a sort of idol, who, as their doctrine delivered, did daily create men by a kind of manufactory operation. This idol they placed in the highest part of the house, on an altar erected about three foot; he was shown in the posture of a Persian emperor, sitting on a superficies, with his legs interwoven under him. This god had a goose for his ensign. . . . His worshippers 'held the universe to be a large suit of clothes which invests everything: that the earth is invested by the air; the air is invested by the stars; and the stars are invested by the *primum mobile*. Look on this globe of earth and you will find it to be a very complete and fashionable dress. What is that which some call land but a fine coat faced with green? or the sea but a waistcoat of water-tabby? Proceed to the particular work of the creation, you will perceive how curious journeyman nature has been to trim up the vegetable beaux; observe how sparkish a perwig adorns the head of a beech, and what a fine doublet of white satin is worn by the birch. To conclude from all, what is man himself but a micro-coat, or rather a complete suit of clothes with all its trimmings?' Once grant this theory, and who can deny that the world is peopled

with suits of clothes and that differences in clothes are differences in fact? 'If one of them be trimmed up with a great gold chain, and a red gown, and a white rod, or a great horse, it is called a lord mayor; if certain ermines and furs be placed in a certain position, we style them a judge; and so an apt conjunction of lawn and black satin we entitle a bishop.'"

No notice of the "Tale of a Tub" would be complete without a reference to the most significant section of all—the Dissertation on Madness. The subject was one which had a terrible fascination for Swift, and in this passage it is hard to say whether his spirit is one of satire or tears.

Madness, says the "Tale," is merely a disturbance or transposition of the brain by certain vapours. Those whose brains are in the ordinary state are content to live out their lives in complacent dulness. It needs a disturbance in the brain to raise a man above his fellows. Hence all great men, from conquerors to philosophers, have been mad. Owing to some accident their secret has not been discovered, and they have had disciples instead of keepers.

This theory, it is true, involves the consequence that a great man is one who begins by deluding himself and ends by deluding others. But, Swift maintains, credulity is the greatest of all blessings. Things that have place in the imagination exist, to all intents and purposes, as palpably as those that are seated in the memory; and, since imagination can suggest far more magnificent and wonderful things than real life can ever give, the fool is not he who imposes on men, but he who undeceives them. The latter, in fact, acts directly contrary to nature; one of whose eternal laws it is to put her best furniture forward. Swift illustrates this paradox as follows: "In most corporeal beings which have fallen under my cognisance,

the outside has been infinitely preferable to the in: whereof I have been farther convinced by some late experiments. Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her person for the worse. Yesterday I ordered the carcass of a beau to be stripped in my presence, when we were all amazed to find so many unsuspected faults under one suit of clothes. Then I laid open his brain, his heart, and his spleen, but I plainly perceived at every operation that the farther we proceeded we found the defects increase upon us in number and bulk; from all which, I justly formed the conclusion to myself that whatever philosopher or projector can find out an art to solder and patch up the flaws and imperfections of nature will deserve much better of mankind and teach us a more useful science, than that so much in present esteem, of widening and exposing them, like him who held anatomy to be the ultimate end of physic." Having thus proved his point to demonstration, Swift concludes with minute instructions to show how the lunatics in Bedlam may be turned into useful servants of the commonwealth. The dangerous madman must be packed off to the war in Flanders; the babbler to Westminster Hall; while the one who gabbles out a string of unmeaning compliments to all his visitors should be sent to St. James's Palace, where he will soon outshine the whole court in the art of flattery.

On the object and effects of the "Tale of a Tub" a volume might be written. Swift declared that his intention was to attack not religion and learning but their abuses. It must, however, be said that this statement finds slight support from a cursory reading of the work itself. That extraordinary indifference to human susceptibilities which occasionally blunts the edge of Swift's satire is nowhere so marked as in the "Tale of a Tub."

As might have been expected it was the religious allegory which, though really the less important part of the work, attracted popular attention. The irreverence with which the author treated all sacred things enabled the fanatics against whom it was specially levelled to brand him as a sceptic and blasphemer. The grossness of those passages in which Swift, as so often happens in his work, has followed the example of Rabelais without the excuse of Rabelais, disgusted a public which grinned at Wycherly and chuckled over Ward. The "Tale of a Tub" lost Swift a bishopric.

In cultured circles, to whom its real merits were obvious, the "Tale" had a most favourable reception. There is no exact evidence to show that Swift ever revealed the secret of his authorship. It must, however, have needed something besides a serious political pamphlet and a few light poems to win him that great reputation which he now began to enjoy among the London wits, and there is strong presumption in the surmise that Addison, when he gave Swift a copy of his recently published "Travels in Italy," inscribed "to the greatest genius of his age," had the "Tale of a Tub" in his mind.¹

The years 1704 to 1707 were spent by Swift partly in Ireland, partly in London. The Whig party growing stronger every year had become more fixed in its opposition to an exclusive Church policy. The bill against occasional conformity disappeared. In 1707, Lord Pembroke was sent as lord lieutenant to Dublin with direct instructions to bring forward a bill in the Irish Parliament for the relief of Protestant Dissenters from their most pressing disabilities. Pembroke's mission failed, but Swift's faith in the Whigs was much shaken

¹ See Forster's "Life of Swift," p. 160.

by this effort at toleration. In the November of 1707, Swift himself came to England at the request of the Irish bishops, to try and obtain from Queen Anne a renunciation of the first-fruits due from the Irish Church. A refusal to entertain his demand, especially if accompanied by a personal slight to himself, would send him over to the Tory ranks.

CHAPTER III.

A TORY CONVERT.

Swift's mission on behalf of the Irish Church—He is disappointed of the bishopric of Waterford—Writes "Project for the Advancement of Religion"—His interview with Godolphin—Whigs favourable to the Dissenters—Growing alienation of Swift from the Whig leaders—His private life at this time—Writes "Sentiments of a Church of England Man"—His "Argument to Prove the Inconveniences of Abolishing Christianity"—Summary and explanation of Swift's religious views—His dislike of the Dissenters—Final triumph of the Whigs—They refuse Swift any assistance—His departure for Ireland—Stay at Laracor—Incidents thereof—He returns to England on a second mission—Change in the political situation there—Accession of the Tories—The Journal to Stella—Swift's account of his own conduct—Policy of Harley—He wins Swift over to the Tory cause—Swift's motives.

SWIFT had come over to England in the same vessel as the Irish viceroy, Lord Pembroke, with whom he had been very intimate at Dublin Castle. After a visit to his mother at Leicester he proceeded to London, where he arrived, it would seem, towards the end of December, 1707. He found the Whig party stronger than ever. The ministry still contained a small Tory leaven; but the Tory opposition to the Spanish succession war, on the steady prosecution of which the Whigs had staked their reputation, rendered the influence of the former party very weak. Before Swift could enter fully on the

question of the Irish first-fruits¹ he soon had evidence that, in spite of his relations with Lord Somers, the Whigs laid little value on his support. In January, 1708, the bishopric of Waterford became vacant. Swift's claims to the succession were suggested, but the Government preferred to promote Dr. Milles. Swift's fury at what he considered a personal slight is hardly concealed in a letter written by him on this occasion to his friend, Archdeacon Walls. ". . . I once had a glimpse," he says, "that things would have gone otherwise. But now I must retire to my morals, and pretend to be wholly without ambition, and to resign with patience. You know by this time who is the happy man; a very worthy person, and I doubt not but the whole kingdom will be pleased with the choice. He will prove an ornament to the order, and a public blessing to the Church and nation. And after this, if you will not allow me to be a good courtier, I will pretend to it no more. But let us talk no further on this subject. I am stomach-sick of it already."

Why Swift's claims were disregarded at this time is not very clear. Considerable discord, however, existed between him and the Whigs on the question of Church policy. It is not impossible, moreover, that the open secret of his authorship of the "Tale of a Tub" still stood against him. There is no formal evidence on the point; but may not his "Project for the Advancement of Religion and the Reformation of Manners," written at this

¹ The value of the twentieth parts, first-fruits and crown-rents, payable to the Crown from the Irish Church was £3,000 a year. They were a heavy burden and their collection was onerous and expensive. A remission of these dues had been urgently demanded by the Irish Convocation after Anne's resignation of the English first-fruits in 1704. See the memorial drawn up by Swift on October 7, 1710, and printed in his correspondence.

time, and dedicated to Lady Berkeley, have been intended to show his real fitness for the episcopal office? It is without exception the dullest of his works, and may be compared with Fielding's "Charge to the Grand Jury of Westminster" to show how tedious a clever man can be, when forced to deal in an uncongenial style with an uncongenial subject. So unlike Swift's ordinary vein is it, that critics have endeavoured to find a hidden meaning in the work. From its recommendations, which repeat the sayings of all moralists in all ages, no extracts need be given. The pamphlet, however, was well received, and Lord Berkeley pressed Swift to see that the queen had a copy thereof. She surely could not fail to form a high opinion of so sound and pious a writer!

In the February of 1708, Robert Harley, the Tory secretary of state, was dismissed from office. Henry St. John, Sir Simon Harcourt, and Sir Thomas Mansell, the remaining Tories in the ministry, resigned, and that body was now wholly Whig.

Swift now hoped that, even though his personal claims had been disregarded, the Government would at any rate fall in with his other demand. But this was not the case. The Whigs, relying for support on the Dissenters, were naturally in favour of conciliating them. When Swift, therefore, after much pressing, at length obtained an interview with the Lord Treasurer Godolphin, he was given to understand that the ministry saw no objection to advising the queen to remit the first-fruits of the Irish Church; but in return for this favour, the Irish bishops must make "due acknowledgments," *i.e.*, allow a repeal of the Sacramental Test against Irish Dissenters.

Swift, who refused to see that politicians give nothing for nothing, was bitterly disappointed. Having resolved to give no guarantee that the Irish bishops would

make the concession required, it must have already been obvious to Swift that his mission could only end in failure. He had dreamed of statesmanship and success; and he found himself in the worst of all positions, that of a wearisome and neglected suitor. He had looked forward to high social and political alliances; and all he obtained were pompous politeness from Somers, grinning complaisances from Halifax, and promises never intended to be kept from the Earl of Pembroke. A letter of Swift's to the Irish primate, Dr. Marsh, on August 28, 1708, shows his disgust with the Whig leaders.

Lord Pembroke's secretary, Dodington is described as "a person who would not give threepence to save all the Established clergy in both kingdoms from the gallows." As to the Whigs in general he says, ". . . In the small conversation I have had among great men, there is one maxim I have found them constantly to observe, which is, that in any business before them, if you inquire how it proceeds, they only consider what is proper to answer, without one single thought whether it be agreeable to fact or no. For instance, here is lord treasurer assures me that what you ask is a trifle; that the queen would easily consent to it, and he would do so too; but then he adds some general conditions, as I told you before. Then comes lord lieutenant; assures me that the other has nothing at all to do with it, and that it is not to come before him, but that *he* has made some progress in it. . . . The progress he means must be something entirely between the queen and himself, for the two chief ministers assure me they never heard of the matter from him."

It is true that in the companionship of the London wits Swift, during this visit, found some consolation for his many disappointments. He gave Steele hints for his *Tatler*; passed long evenings in conversation with

Addison; sat for his portrait to the painter Jervas; and made cruel sport of astrologer Partridge.

John Partridge, who seems to have combined the trades of shoemaker and quack-doctor, was wont to publish an annual almanac, containing prophecies for the ensuing year. The latter readily lent itself to parody. In the beginning of 1708, therefore, Swift published, under the name of Isaac Bickerstaff, a portentous list of forthcoming events. Most almanacs of this kind spoke only in general terms. Bickerstaff, more boldly, dealt with actual names and fixed dates. Thus the Cardinal de Noailles was to die on April 4th; Louis XIV. on July 29th; the Pope on September 11th. But, first of all—a mere trifle, only mentioned to show how blind professional astrologers were in their own concerns—Partridge, the almanac maker was to die on “March 29th next, about eleven at night, of a raging fever,” for which reason he had better settle his affairs as soon as possible. In due course of time there appeared a solemn account of Partridge’s illness and death on the pre-appointed day. Written by Swift himself, it described Partridge’s death-bed repentance with great minuteness. The sad event, however, took place four hours later than foretold, by which it would seem that Mr. Bickerstaff was slightly mistaken in his calculations.

In answer to this, Swift’s friends published a burlesque protest supposed to come from Partridge, saying that he was still alive and had suffered great annoyance from the story of his death. The sexton had tolled the bell for him; the undertaker had come to measure him for his coffin; and when he appeared in the street his friends swore he was a ghost. The whole affair was conducted with such an air of gravity that at length the real Partridge himself became alarmed; and in his

almanac for the next year, 1709, he published a solemn statement to the effect that he, John Partridge, shoemaker, had not died on March 29th last. Swift's rejoinder is the cleverest piece of fooling in the English language.

Writing again under the name of Bickerstaff, he remonstrated with Partridge for the invectives he had lavished on his brother prophet. "To call a man a fool and villain, an impudent fellow, only for differing from him in a point purely speculative, is, in my humble opinion, a very improper style for a person of his education. . . . If men of public spirit must be superciliously treated for their ingenious attempts, how will true, useful knowledge be ever advanced?" Bickerstaff objected to self-praise, but in defence he felt bound to call attention to a few testimonials sent him from foreign professors. "The most learned Leibnitz thus addresses me in his third letter: '*Illustrissimo Bickerstaffio astrologiæ instauratori,*' &c. M. Le Clerc, quoting my predictions in a treatise he published last year, is pleased to say, '*Ita nuperrime Bickerstaffius, magnum illud Angliæ sidus.*' Another great professor, writing of me, has these words: '*Bickerstaffius, nobilis Anglus, astrologorum hujusæculi facile princeps.*'"

It is true a certain Frenchman had written to point out an error of Mr. Bickerstaff's relating to the Cardinal de Noailles. But was a Frenchman, a papist and an enemy, to be believed against an English Protestant, who was true to the present Government?

With this preliminary justification, Bickerstaff now turned to Partridge's denial of the fact that he, Partridge, had died on the appointed day.

Firstly, about a thousand gentlemen have bought Partridge's almanac for the ensuing year, and at every

line they cried out "they were sure no man alive ever writ such damned stuff as this." Wherefore Mr. Partridge is bound either to disown his almanac or to allow himself to be no man alive!

Secondly, "death is defined by all philosophers a separation of the soul and body. Now it is certain that the poor woman, who has best reason to know (*i.e.*, Mrs. Partridge), has gone about for some time to every ally in the neighbourhood, and sworn to the gossips that her husband had neither life nor soul in him. Therefore, if an uninformed carcass walks still about, and is pleased to call itself Partridge, Mr. Bickerstaff does not think himself any way answerable for that. . . ."

Thirdly, "Mr. Partridge pretends to tell fortunes and recover stolen goods, which all the parish says he must do by conversing with the devil and other evil spirits, and no man will ever allow he could converse personally with either till after he was dead."

Fourthly, "Partridge says in the preface to his new almanac that 'he is not only now alive, but was also alive upon that very 29th of March which I foretold he should die on'; by this he declares his opinion that a man may be alive now who was not alive a twelve-month ago. And, indeed, there lies the sophistry of his argument. He dares not assert he was alive ever since that 29th of March, but that he 'is now alive and was so on that day.'"

Fifthly, says Bickerstaff, "I will appeal to Mr. Partridge himself whether it be probable I could have been so indiscreet to begin my predictions with the only falsehood that ever was pretended to be in them; and this in an affair at home, where I had so many opportunities to be exact, and must have given such advantages against me to a person of Mr. Partridge's wit and learning, who,

if he could possibly have raised one single objection more against the truth of my prophecies, would hardly have spared me."

Little satisfaction could be found in paying a succession of unwelcome visits to busy ministers, so Swift had plenty of time to employ in literature. In March, 1708, he put forth his "Sentiments of a Church of England Man on Religion and Government." He wrote partly in the character of a moderator between the extremes of Whig and Tory; partly to defend the Church of England against the charges of absolutism and intolerance brought against it by the more advanced Whigs.

As in his "Dissensions in Athens and Rome," Swift speaks strongly against the folly of a blind adherence to party distinctions. "To enter into a party, as into an order of friars, with so resigned an obedience to superiors, is very unsuitable both with the civil and religious liberties we so zealously assert. Thus the understandings of a whole senate are often enslaved by three or four leaders on each side, who, instead of intending the public weal, have their hearts wholly set upon ways and means how to get or to keep employments. But to speak more at large, how has this spirit of faction mingled itself with the mass of the people, changed their nature and manners, and the very genius of the nation; broke all the laws of charity, neighbourhood, alliance, and hospitality; destroyed all ties of friendship, and divided families against themselves? And no wonder it should be so, when, in order to find out the character of a person, instead of inquiring whether he be a man of virtue, honour, piety, wit, good sense, or learning, the modern question is only whether he be a Whig or a Tory; under which terms all good and ill qualities are included."

This being the case, a Church of England man is not bound by nature or tradition to any party. He will support that party or section which at any given time seems best capable of promoting the general good of Church and state. There are, however, certain general principles to which a Church of England man is strongly attached. Firstly, he recognises the justice and necessity of the Revolution. The expulsion of James II., it is true, involved a breach of constitutional forms. But there is a power behind the constitution—that of natural justice; and it is an inherent principle of limited monarchy that the monarch must be punished if he refuse to observe the limitations placed upon him. That certain clergy, in times past, have upheld the doctrine of non-resistance to the Crown cannot be gainsaid. But had they not some excuse in the memory of a frightful civil war, produced by the breach of that doctrine? Is not, moreover, resistance to the Crown merely a technical term implying resistance to the supreme power of the whole people, as expressed in their legislature? Secondly, in religious matters, a Church of England man has a firm belief in “God and His providence, together with revealed religion and the divinity of Christ”; and a “true veneration for the scheme established among us of ecclesiastical government; and though he will not determine whether episcopacy be of Divine right, he is sure it is most agreeable to primitive institution, fittest of all others for preserving order and purity, and, under its present regulations, best calculated for our civil state.”

As to toleration, Swift's remarks are of great interest as throwing light on the general Church feeling of his time. He objects to making changes in fixed ceremonial at the request of Dissenters. This, he says, would only

be of use if accompanied by a guarantee that no new sects would ever arise to trouble the new system. All sects should be tolerated, but offices of emolument under the constitution should be reserved for those who will consent to support that constitution, civil and ecclesiastical. It would be impossible to frame a completely comprehensive test ; and the abolition of all tests would admit to office "Papists, Atheists, Mahometans, Heathens, and Jews."

The Puritans, it must be remembered, when in power, destroyed the old government and religion, and put their administrators to death. Can a Church of England man be blamed for refusing to give them a second chance of doing so ?

Swift comments severely on the injustice of which the Whigs were guilty in raising "a perpetual clamour against the ambition, the implacable temper, and the covetousness of the priesthood." "Church" and "High Church" are very far from synonymous. Did not the English Church prove its love for public liberty by taking the chief share in the Revolution ? Let the Whigs beware, then, lest by their insensate diatribes they unite the whole Church against them. The concluding passage, in which Swift states the historical argument in favour of an exclusive Church establishment, has the cogency, though not the sonorous roll, of Burke.

"I leave it among the divines to dilate upon the danger of schism as a spiritual evil ; but I would consider it only as a temporal one. And I think it clear that any great separation from the Established worship, though to a new one that is more pure and perfect, may be an occasion of endangering the public peace, because it will compose a body always in reserve, prepared to follow any discontented heads, upon the plausible pretext of

advancing true religion and opposing error, superstition, or idolatry. For this reason Plato lays it down as a maxim that men ought to worship the gods according to the laws of the country; and he introduces Socrates, in his last discourse, utterly disowning the crime laid to his charge, of teaching new divinities or methods of worship. Thus the poor Huguenots of France were engaged in a civil war by the specious pretences of some who, under the guise of religion, sacrificed so many thousand lives to their own ambition and revenge. Thus was the whole body of Puritans in England drawn to be instruments or abettors of all manner of villainy, by the artifices of a few men, whose designs from the first were levelled to destroy the constitution both of religion and government. And thus, even in Holland itself, where it is pretended that the variety of sects live so amicably together and in such perfect obedience to the magistrate, it is notorious how a turbulent party, joining with the Arminians, did, in the memory of our fathers, attempt to destroy the liberty of that republic. So that, upon the whole, where sects are tolerated in a state, it is fit they should enjoy a full liberty of conscience, and every other privilege of freeborn subjects to which no power is annexed. And to preserve their obedience upon all emergencies, a government cannot give them too much ease nor trust them with too little power."

A work of far more brilliancy and interest is "The Argument to Prove the Inconvenience of Abolishing Christianity," written in the January of 1708. It is the best instance of Swift's ironical style. The author begins by an apology for his rashness in daring to write in favour of a system, the absurdity and uselessness of which has been so thoroughly exposed. It is not, however, in favour of *real* Christianity, "such as used in

primitive times (if we may believe the authors of those ages), to have an influence upon men's belief and actions," but solely of the *nominal* faith professed at the present day.

Firstly, it is said that the abolition of Christianity, accompanied as it would be by the cessation of prosecutions for blasphemy, would pave the way to that greatest of all blessings, complete liberty of conscience.

"In answer to all which," says Swift, "with deference to wiser judgments, I think this rather shows the necessity of a nominal religion among us. Great wits love to be free with the highest objects; and if they cannot be allowed a God to revile or renounce, they will speak evil of dignities, abuse the government, and reflect upon the ministry, which I am sure few will deny to be of much more pernicious consequence, according to the saying of Tiberius, *Deorum offensa diis curæ*. . . . And to urge another argument of a parallel nature: if Christianity were once abolished, how could the freethinkers, the strong reasoners, and the men of profound learning, be able to find another subject, so calculated in all points, whereon to display their abilities? What wonderful productions of wit should we be deprived of from those whose genius, by continual practice, has been wholly turned upon raillery and invectives against religion, and would therefore never be able to shine or distinguish themselves upon any other subject. We are daily complaining of the great decline of wit among us, and we would take away the greatest, perhaps the only topic we have left."

Secondly, Swift notices the telling argument against Christianity in the large amount of money now devoted to the support of the clergy.

"It is likewise urged that there are, by computation,

in this kingdom, above ten thousand parsons whose revenues, added to those of my lords the bishops, would suffice to maintain at least two hundred young gentlemen of wit and pleasure, and freethinking enemies to priestcraft, narrow principles, pedantry, and prejudices, who might be an ornament to the court and town: and then again, so great a number of able [bodied] divines might be a recruit to our fleet and armies. This, indeed, appears to be a consideration of some weight; but then, on the other side, several things deserve to be considered likewise: as first, whether it may not be thought necessary that in certain tracts of country, like what we call parishes, there shall be one man at least of abilities to read and write. Then it seems a wrong computation that the revenues of the Church throughout this island would be large enough to maintain two hundred young gentlemen, or even half that number, after the present refined way of living; that is, to allow each of them such a rent, as in the modern form of speech, would make them easy. But still there is in this project a greater mischief behind; and we ought to beware of the woman's folly who killed the hen that every morning laid her a golden egg. For, pray, what would become of the race of men in the next age if we had nothing to trust to beside the scrofulous, consumptive productions furnished by our men of wit and pleasure, when, having squandered away their vigour, health, and estates, they are forced, by some disagreeable marriage, to piece up their broken fortunes and entail rottenness and politeness on their posterity? Now, here are ten thousand parsons reduced, by the wise regulations of Henry VIII., to the necessity of a low diet and moderate exercise, who are the only great restorers of our breed, without which the nation would in an age or two become one great hospital."

Thirdly, there is the plea that great advantage would be gained by ceasing to waste one day out of every seven in prayer, and by employing religious edifices for purposes of practical utility.

"I hope," Swift answers, "I shall be forgiven a hard word, if I call this a perfect *cavil*. I readily own there has been an old custom, time out of mind, for people to assemble in the churches every Sunday, and that shops are still frequently shut in order, as it is conceived, to preserve the memory of that ancient practice; but how this can prove a hindrance to business or pleasure is hard to imagine. What if the men of pleasure are forced, one day in the week, to game at home instead of the chocolate houses? Are not the taverns and coffee-houses open? Can there be a more convenient season for taking a dose of physic? Is not Sunday the chief day for traders to sum up the accounts of the week, and for lawyers to prepare their briefs? But I would fain know how it can be pretended that the churches are misapplied? Where are more appointments and rendezvouses of gallantry? Where more care to appear in the foremost box with greater advantage of dress? Where more meetings for business? Where more bargains driven of all sorts; and where so many conveniences or excitements to sleep?"

But surely, in the fourth place, it is absurd to pay preachers to denounce every Sunday the practices which men engaged in the pursuit of business or pleasure follow during the other days of the week.

"This objection," Swift thinks, "is a little unworthy of so refined an age as ours. Let us argue this matter calmly. I appeal to the breast of any polite freethinker, whether, in the pursuit of gratifying a predominant passion, he has not always felt a wonderful incitement, by reflecting it was a thing forbidden; and therefore we

see, in order to cultivate his taste, the wisdom of the nation has taken special care that the ladies shall be furnished with prohibited silks, and the men with prohibited wine. And, indeed, it were to be wished that some other prohibitions were promoted, in order to improve the pleasures of the town ; which, for want of such expedients, begin already, as I am told, to flag and grow languid, giving way daily to cruel inroads from the spleen."

Lastly, there is the suggestion that the abolition of Christianity will take away the greatest of all sources of discord among men. Do men ever quarrel so furiously as over a disputed point of dogma or ceremonial ?

To this the reply is made that "there is one darling inclination of mankind which usually affects to be a retainer to religion, though she be neither its parent, its godmother, or its friend ; I mean the spirit of opposition that lived long before Christianity, and can easily subsist without it. Let us, for instance, examine wherein the opposition of sectaries among us consists ; we shall find Christianity to have no share in it at all. Does the gospel anywhere prescribe a starched, squeezed countenance, a stiff formal gait, a singularity of manners and habit, or any affected modes of speech, different from the reasonable part of mankind ? ¹ Yet, if Christianity did not lend its name to stand in the gap, and to employ or divert these humours, they must of necessity be spent in contraventions to the laws of the land and disturbance of the public peace. There is a portion of enthusiasm assigned to every nation, which, if it has not proper objects to work on, will burst out and set all in a flame. If the quiet of a state can be bought by only flinging men a few ceremonies to devour, it is a purchase no wise man would

¹ A reference to the exaggerated Puritanical bearing of the Dissenters.

refuse. Let the mastiffs amuse themselves about a sheep's skin stuffed with hay, provided it will keep them from worrying the flock."

Swift concludes, therefore, that the abolition of Christianity, or rather religion in general, for the latter, not the former, is the great origin of evil, will be attended with several inconveniences. He is, of course, ready to bow to superior authority. But if religion must be abolished, he suggests that this should be delayed to a time of peace. Our allies are Christians, and might misunderstand our motives!

The present opportunity may be taken for a brief explanation of Swift's religious views. He was not one of those who are able to look upon the conflicting claims of different creeds with the wise calm of a tolerant philosophy. Of Roman Catholicism, Swift, like most Englishmen of his time, was too ignorant to form a rational idea. The eighteenth-century Briton had a deep horror of "Popery and wooden shoes"—a sort of two-headed chimera, like the famous "Pitt-et-Coburg" of the French Revolutionists. Even to Swift's educated mind a Catholic priest was never more than a compound of the professional impostor and the stage villain.

In the same way, Swift's incapability of realising the sterling qualities of his Nonconformist fellow-countrymen, will always be a source of surprise to succeeding generations. His hatred of the Dissenters, it must be noticed, was not based on doctrinal grounds. To these, indeed, he paid little attention. What he disliked in the Puritans was their lack of culture, their horror of amusement, and their hatred of artistic beauty—in a word, the complete absence in their life of what he regarded as life's essentials, sweetness and light. To his intensely logical mind, moreover, fanaticism—that is to say the habit

of appealing to sentiment instead of to reason—was to the last degree odious ; and in the Puritanism of his day he saw fanaticism in its most extravagant guise. It must be remembered, also, that the memory of Puritan domination during the Commonwealth was still a strong tradition. Men had seen that Puritanism, pushed to a logical conclusion, became a tyranny, in comparison with which the system of Naples or Castile, during the palmy days of the Holy Office, was tolerant and enlightened ; and Swift, like countless other honest men, thought it his bounden duty to watch against the recurrence of such a calamity. It may be added, in conclusion, that Swift's views on the exclusive policy of the English Church were strongly affected by the fact that he himself was an ordained clergyman. Like a soldier at his post, he considered his own prestige as inseparably bound up with that of the army to which he belonged.

The death of Prince George, Anne's husband, on October 28, 1708, was followed by several changes in the ministry. Lord Pembroke was placed at the Admiralty. Lord Somers, Swift's early friend and patron, became president of the council. These changes might, under ordinary circumstances, have been greatly to Swift's satisfaction. But it soon became evident that the more exclusively Whig the ministry became, the more favourable it would be to the Dissenters. To Lord Wharton, the new Irish viceroy with whom Addison was associated as chief secretary, direct instructions were given to press for a repeal of the disabilities imposed on Irish Dissenters. Swift soon began to look on Wharton as his deadly enemy. The cause of quarrel between the two is unknown. A story was long afterwards told that Swift applied, through Somers, for the post of chaplain at the Castle, which Wharton refused, with the cutting remark, "My lord,

we must not prefer these fellows; we have not character enough ourselves." As embodying the general opinion of Dr. Swift's ecclesiastical reputation, the story has in it nothing improbable.¹ It, however, rests on very weak evidence; and in view of Swift's wonderful ability for contracting inveterate dislikes, it is enough to suppose that Wharton's offence consisted partly in his political opinions, partly in some personal slight offered to Swift himself. Whatever the reason of the quarrel, Wharton's appointment proved to Swift that between him and the Whigs there was a great gulf fixed. He now abandoned his efforts in the first-fruits remission matter. So small had his interest in home affairs grown that when, shortly after these events, a suggestion was made to send Lord Berkeley on a special mission to Vienna, Swift applied for the post of secretary to his lordship. The mission, however, never came off. In December, 1708, Swift's animosity against the Whigs had grown so strong that he wrote a violent pamphlet to denounce the proposed repeal of tests in Ireland. It was written in an assumed character, and is entitled, "A Letter from a Member of the House of Commons in Ireland to a Member of the House of Commons in England, concerning the Sacramental Test." London was obviously no place for him under present circumstances. On May 3rd he called on Lord Halifax to say good-bye. His lordship offered him a book, "*Poésies Chrétiennes de M. Jolivet.*" Swift took it and carefully wrote upon the fly-leaf, "This is the only favour I have ever received from him (Lord Halifax).

¹ On the eve of his departure from England, Swift published an "Apology for the Tale of a Tub." This evidently points to a suspicion existing in his mind that it would have been better for his prospects of advancement if the "Tale" itself had never been written.

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Sir G. Kneller, pinx.

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Joseph Addison.

or his party." After a short stay—destined, unfortunately, to be the last—with his mother at Leicester, Swift set out for Ireland.

From the personal and the political point of view, his visit to England had been an utter failure. Yet he dreaded the return to Laracor. On the eve of his departure from England he heard that Dr. South, Bishop of Cork and holder of a prebend at Westminster, already in his eightieth year, was seriously ill. Like a drowning man catching at a straw, Swift hurriedly wrote off to Lord Halifax. He hoped his lordship would think of him for the bishopric if Dr. South died. Even the prebend would be welcome; and he reminds Halifax, "The late king promised me a prebend at Westminster, when I petitioned him in pursuance of a recommendation from Sir William Temple." Halifax wrote back, some months later. He was quite ashamed of leaving such a genius as Dr. Swift unprovided for. Dr. South could not be immortal, and when he departed Lord Halifax would see that justice was done. But when Dr. South died, another was again preferred in Swift's place, and the episcopal mitre was as far off as ever.

By the end of June, 1709, Swift was back at Laracor. Swift's stay in Ireland lasted for fourteen months. On May 10, 1710, he received news that his mother had died at Leicester, on April 24, 1710. Between mother and son there had always been a close and sincere affection. "I have now," wrote Swift in his note-book, "lost my barrier between me and death. God grant I may live to be as well prepared for it as I confidently believe her to have been! If the way to heaven be through piety, truth, justice, and charity, she is there." Family ties were for him now at an end. His only sister, Jane Swift, had married a currier named Fenton,



Joseph Addison



Sir G. Kneller, pinx.

Dawson, ph. sc.

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Joseph Addison.

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of Bride Street, Dublin. Swift, according to Deane Swift,¹ despised Fenton because of his occupation. Whatever the reason, he was furious at the marriage. Some years after, Fenton became bankrupt. Swift indeed consented to give his sister a small allowance; but with his usual implacability, he refused to resume friendly relations with her; nor did he swerve from the resolution till her death in 1738.

Swift naturally saw a good deal of Mr. Secretary Addison. But while Wharton was viceroy, the gates of Dublin Castle were shut to him. He found no consolation for his ambition in his work at Laracor. "I am this minute very busy," he writes to Dean Sterne, "being to preach to-day before an audience of at least fifteen people, most of them gentle, and all simple. I can send you no news; only the employment of my parishioners may, for memory's sake, be reduced under these heads: Mr. Percival is ditching; Mrs. Percival in her kitchen; Mr. Wesley switching; Mrs. Wesley stitching; Sir Arthur Longford *riching*—which is a new word for heaping up riches." The man was evidently pining for London life, with its vast political interests, its brilliant society, and its rich prizes. It is difficult, therefore, to regard as genuine his expressions of dissatisfaction when he received an invitation from the Irish bishops to return to England, on the affair of the first-fruits. Swift, in this second attempt, was associated with the Bishops of Ossory and Killaloe. On August 31st, accompanied by his servant Patrick, he crossed the Channel; and on Thursday, September 7th, he arrived in London, for what was destined to be the most eventful epoch of his life.

He came to find the political world as completely changed as the colours in a kaleidoscope. In October,

¹ A grandson of the Godwin Swift mentioned in chap. i. by the latter's marriage with a Miss Deane.

1708, the Whigs had been supreme. But they were not destined to a long duration of power. England was fast growing weary of the Spanish succession war. By an extraordinary act of political fatuity the allies had refused the abject terms offered by Louis XIV. in the beginning of 1709. France rallied for a last effort, and before the end of the year Englishmen read with astonishment and horror that it had cost the lives of 20,000 allied soldiers to carry the French positions at Malplaquet, while the lives of the vanquished in this so-called victory amounted to little more than half that number. The Whig hero, Marlborough's, rapacity in engrossing offices and pensions disgusted every one. The queen was fast becoming weary of the duchess's arrogance at court, and a new favourite, the secret emissary of the ex-Tory minister Harley, was rapidly acquiring influence in her place. In 1710, the impeachment of the Tory preacher, Dr. Sacheverell, raised a tremendous rush of Church feeling against the Government. In June, 1710, Lord Sunderland,^{*} and, in the August following, Lord Godolphin, were dismissed from office. Harley was made chancellor of the exchequer, and found himself, to all intents and purposes, prime minister. A lover of moderation, he endeavoured to form a coalition with the less advanced Whigs. But the negotiations fell through; and after some weeks, during which a new parliament with a Tory majority was returned, the ministry was reconstituted on a Tory basis. Sir Simon Harcourt became attorney-general, and later on lord chancellor. Rochester was lord president in place of Somers. Ormond replaced Wharton as Viceroy of Ireland; and the post of secretary of state was bestowed on one who, though young in years, had already made his mark as the first orator, the most graceful scholar, and

^{*} Son of the Lord Sunderland mentioned in chap. i.

the most brilliant statesman of the time—Henry St. John.

The two months which followed Swift's arrival in England are the most interesting in his career. They find him the humble hanger-on of a beaten party. They leave him the honoured ally of a victorious one. Of the incidents of his conduct and the motives which actuated him during this and the ensuing period, we fortunately possess a full account in the "*Journal to Stella*." This consists of a series of letters written in the form of a diary to his one friend on earth.¹ With no object for reservation, with no suspicion of publicity, writing down every passing whim and prejudice on the spur of the moment, the "*Journal to Stella*" forms the fullest and the most reliable account of his conduct there can possibly be. Let Swift, therefore, tell the story of his adhesion to the Tories in his own words.

September 9, 1710.—"I got here," says Swift, "last Tuesday, after five days' travelling: weary the first, almost dead the second, tolerable the third, and well enough the rest; and am now glad of the fatigue, which has served for exercise. The Whigs were ravished to see me, and would lay hold on me as a twig while they are drowning, and the great men making me their clumsy apologies. But my lord treasurer (Godolphin) received me with a great deal of coldness, which has enraged me so, I am almost vowing revenge."

How keenly Swift felt these personal slights is constantly evident. On September 10th he writes:—"At ten I went to the coffee-house, hoping to find Lord Radnor, whom I had not seen. He was there; for an hour and

¹ The first date in the *Journal* is September 2, 1710; the last, June 6, 1713. The "*Journal to Stella*" was really written for Mrs. Dingley as well as Esther Johnson.

a half we talked treason heartily against the Whigs, their baseness and ingratitude. And I am come home rolling resentments in my mind, and framing schemes of revenge: full of which (having written down some hints) I go to bed."

Harley was still trying to negotiate with the Whigs, a few of whom even now remained in office. The latter, however, would have none of him, and bent their efforts to forming a revival of their own strength in the country at large. When Swift applied to them on the affair of the first-fruits, they naturally told him it was impossible to discuss the matter now. His rage against the doomed party grew keener, and he now resolved to apply to Harley himself, whose strong Church views were well known.

Besides a desire to gain the support of the Church, Harley had another end in view. Most of the clever writers of the day were to be found in the Whig ranks. And to strengthen the Tory side it would be absolutely necessary to win some of them over. The minister well knew the extraordinary powers which lay hid in the person of Dr. Swift. When he heard that the latter had received a rebuff from the Whigs, he resolved to send for him at once. In the following extracts the success of Harley's conduct will be detailed; but the reader will notice that it was not the readiness to settle the first-fruits question, but the personal courtesy shown by Harley and his friends to Swift himself, which really turned the latter from a Whig into a Tory henchman.

October 4th Swift writes:—"After I had put out my candle last night, my landlady came into my room with a servant of Lord Halifax (a Whig) to desire I would go dine with him at his house near Hampton Court; but I sent him word I had business of great importance that hindered me, &c., &c. And to-day I was brought privately to Mr. Harley, who received me with the greatest respect and kindness imaginable: he has appointed me an hour on

Saturday at four, afternoon, when I will open my business to him."

October 7th.—"Going this evening . . . to visit Mr. Harley by his own appointment. . . . They had just done dinner. Mr. Harley came out to me and brought me in, and presented me to his son-in-law (Viscount Dupplin), and his own son, and among others Will Penn the Quaker: we sat two hours drinking as good wine as you do: and two hours more he and I alone: where he heard me tell my business, entered into it with all kindness, asked for my powers and read them; and read likewise a memorial I had drawn up, and put it in his pocket to show the queen, told me the measures he would take, and, in short, said everything I could wish; told me he must bring Mr. St. John, secretary of state, and me acquainted: and spoke so many things of personal kindness and esteem for me, that I am inclined half to believe what some friends have told me, that he would do everything to bring me over. . . . He has desired me to dine with him on Tuesday, and, after four hours being with him, set me down at St. James's Coffee-house in a hackney coach. All this is odd and comical, if you consider him and me. He knew my Christian name very well."

October 8th.—"I must tell you a great piece of refinement of Harley. He charged me to come to him often; I told him I was loath to trouble him in so much business as he had, and desired I might have leave to come at his *levée*; which he immediately refused, and said, 'That was not a place for *friends* to come to.'"

October 10th.—"I dined with Mr. Harley to-day, who presented me to the attorney-general, Sir Simon Harcourt, with much compliment on all sides, &c. Harley told me he had shown my memorial to the queen, and seconded it very heartily; and he desires me to dine with

him again on Sunday, when he promises to settle it with her Majesty before she names a governor,¹ and I protest I am in hopes it will be done all but the forms by that time, for he loves the Church; this is a popular thing, and he would not have a governor share in it; and besides, I am told by all hands he has a mind to gain me over." From the last sentence it would seem Swift knew Harley's design; but he was a willing victim, and had already made up his mind to break with the Whigs. On October 12th he writes:—"Lord Halifax is always teasing me to go down to his country house, which will cost me a guinea to his servants and twelve shillings coach hire; and he shall be hanged first." Giving full play to his new views, he wrote a lampoon on Godolphin, entitled "Sid Hamet's Rod." He refers to it in a tone of great glee in the *Journal* for October 15th:—"I dined to-day with Mr. Harley; Mr. Prior² dined with us. He has left my memorial with the queen. . . . After dinner came in Lord Peterborough: we renewed our acquaintance and he grew mightily fond of me. They began to talk of a paper of verses called 'Sid Hamet.' Mr. Harley repeated part, and then pulled them out, and gave them to a gentleman at the table to read, though they had all read them often; Lord Peterborough would let nobody read them but himself; so he did; and Mr. Harley bobbed me at every line to take notice of the beauties. . . . Harley presented me to Lord President of Scotland (Dalrymple), and Mr. Benson, a lord of the treasury."

Sid Hamet was Godolphin; his rod was the white staff, the sign of his office of lord treasurer. The

¹ *I.e.*, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The Duke of Ormond was selected for this post.

² Matthew Prior (1664-1721), poet and wit, first patronised by the Whigs, but won over to the Tories by Harley.

poem is very bitter in tone, and one can well imagine the glee with which it was received at a Tory dinner party. The following lines refer to Godolphin's slavish deference to moneyed men :—

“They tell us something strange and odd,
About a certain magic rod,
That, bending down its top, divines
Whene'er the soil has golden mines ;
Where there are none it stands erect,
Scorning to show the least respect :
As ready was the wand of Sid
To bend where golden mines were hid.”

Then comes a reference to Godolphin's sleep-bringing style of oratory :—

“The rod of Hermes was renown'd
For charms above and under ground ;
To sleep could mortal eyelids fix,
And drive departed souls to Styx.
That rod was just a type of Sid's,
Which o'er a British senate's lids
Could scatter opium full as well,
And drive as many souls to Hell.”

Lastly, Godolphin's trick of winning political adherents by delusive promises of Government appointments is thus satirised :—

“Sid's rod was slender, white, and tall,
Which oft he used to fish withal ;
A place was fastened to the hook,
And many score of gudgeons took ;
Yet still so happy was his fate,
He caught his fish and saved his bait.”

Harley's engagement about the first-fruits was no courtier's promise. On October 21st the queen granted the desired remission. Harley, however, was not con-

tented with this. In the memorial announcing the remission to the Irish bishops, special mention was made of the great energy and devotion shown in the matter by Dr. Swift—a subtle flattery by which Swift was greatly delighted.

“I believe never anything was compassed so soon,” says the Journal, “and purely done by my personal credit with Mr. Harley, who is so excessively obliging, that I know not what to make of it, unless to show the rascals of the other party that they used a man unworthily who had deserved them better.” St. John, the secretary of state, who “used me with all the kindness imaginable,” Swift was not able to meet till November 11th. But by the end of October his alliance with the Tory ministry was fully sealed. In his “Memoir Relating to the Change in Queen Anne’s Ministry in 1710,” Swift gives a concise though not very straightforward account of the arrangement between them. When the affair of the first-fruits, he says, was completed, he paid Harley a visit to return thanks, and announced his intention of now returning to Ireland. Harley thereupon, says Swift, told me “He and his friends knew very well what useful things I had written against the principles of the late discarded faction,¹ and that my personal esteem for several among them would not make me a favourer of their cause: that there was now entirely a new scene: that the queen was resolved to employ none but those who were friends to the Con-

¹ Referring to Swift’s pamphlets, “The Sentiments of a Church of England Man,” and the “Letter on the Sacramental Test.” When accused of being a “Trimmer,” Swift referred to them to show he had been a Tory in 1708, and had already incurred the dislike of the Whigs because of his views. But it must be remembered that these works were published anonymously, so his statement is not worth much.

stitution of Church and State : that their great difficulty lay in the want of some good pen, to keep up the spirit raised in the people, to avert the principles and justify the proceedings of the new ministers." The minister went on to say that the writers now in present employ did not give complete satisfaction ; would Swift therefore undertake the task ? In return the Government would see that his services were properly acknowledged. Swift closed with the offer.

On November 2, 1710, he took charge of the ministerial organ, *The Examiner*. The Whigs had discarded him, but his hour of revenge had come. "Rot them for ungrateful dogs," he wrote in his Journal. "I will make them repent their usage (of me) before I leave this place."

On the morality of Swift's desertion from the Whigs to the Tories much needless comment has been written. It is enough to state here that a biographer's attitude should be strictly impersonal ; and that he should confine himself to tracing the development of dominant characteristics, rather than to showing how certain actions fall above or below a certain moral standard.¹ There is, moreover, no subject less worthy of discussion than the question of political consistency. To deal with the last century alone, it is impossible to name a single eminent statesman

¹ Thomas Carlyle has thus stated the real object of biography : "What are your historical facts ; still more your biographical ? Wilt thou know a man, above all a man-kind, by stringing together bead-rolls of what thou namest facts ? The man is the spirit he worked in ; not what he did, but what he became. Facts are engraved hieroglyphs, for which the fewest have the key, and then how your block-head studies not their meaning ; but simply whether they are well or ill-cut, what he calls moral or immoral !" (*"Sartor Resartus,"* bk. ii. ch. x.). That great defect of English criticism, the attempt to find a moral in everything, is specially noticed by M. Taine in his "History of English Literature."

whose career is not marked by the most gross and glaring contradictions. What has been said against Swift may be said with greater truth against Bolingbroke, Walpole, both the Pitts, and Charles James Fox.

All, therefore, that requires to be asked is, What motives influenced Swift when he consented to become a Tory henchman? Regarding the earlier part of his conduct there is obviously no difficulty. He had laid it down as an axiom that a "Church of England man" was at perfect liberty to attach himself to whatever party seemed best likely to promote his own special interests. And he went from Somers to Harley solely because the latter was more friendly to the Church of England than the former. But the matter of the first-fruits was settled and done with in October, 1710. What, then, induced Swift to go beyond this point and turn himself into a close ally of the Tory party on matters disconnected with the Church? In accordance with the view taken of his character in the preceding pages, his motives must be regarded as purely personal.

Conscious of his strength, his ambition was to be able to shape the destinies of a nation; to be the adviser of its chosen statesmen and the companion of its most brilliant society; and to prove the folly of those who had committed the unpardonable crime of refusing to recognise his talents. All this and more the Tories were ready to give him in return for political support. Like Mirabeau, when he undertook the defence of the French monarchy against the Revolution, Swift was ready to join any party which consented to place its conduct in his hands. What use he made of political and social greatness the two ensuing chapters will endeavour to show.

CHAPTER IV.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY.

Harley and St. John—Fondness of Swift for Harley—His character of St. John—Distrust of that statesman—Difficulties of the Tory ministry—Swift's writings in *The Examiner*—His condemnation of the Whig party and their leaders—Eulogy of the Tory ministers—Swift's invectives against Wharton—General policy of the Tories—Estrangement between Swift and his old friends, Addison and Steele—Vexation of Swift thereat—Close intimacy of Swift with Harley and St. John—A quarrel with Harley—A quarrel with St. John—The "Journal to Stella," a record of events—The Tory leaders willing to retain the Duke of Marlborough—But resolved on the duchess's expulsion from court—Swift's attacks on the duke—Avarice of the latter—The ministry resolve to open negotiations for peace with France—Gaultier's mission—The war attacked in *The Examiner*—Guiscard's attempt to murder Harley—Consequent popularity of Harley—Anxiety of Swift on his account—Prior's mission to France—Swift's burlesque account thereof—The preliminaries of peace signed—Opposition to it of the Whigs—They are joined by Nottingham—The peace condemned in the House of Lords—Alarm of the ministry—Swift's "Conduct of the Allies"—His ballad on Lord Nottingham—His "Windsor Prophecy"—Punishment of Marlborough—The "Fable of Midas"—Pamphlet warfare—The Stamp Act—Swift as a patron—Hesitation of the ministry to promote him—Is made Dean of St. Patrick's—Peace signed—Swift's quarrel with Steele—His departure for Ireland.

OF the new ministers, those with whom Swift was most brought into contact were Harley and St. John. Few statesmen have had a finer monument than that erected

to Harley by Alexander Pope in the well-known lines beginning:—

“A soul supreme in each hard instance tried,
Above all pain, all passion, and all pride,
The rage of pow'r, the blast of public breath,
The lust of lucre, and the dread of death.”

Pope's admiration was, if anything, surpassed by that of Swift. In his “Inquiry into the Behaviour of the Queen's Last Ministry,” the latter describes Harley as “a person of as much virtue as can possibly consist with the love of power; and his love of power is no greater than what is common to men of his superior capacities; neither did any man ever appear to value it less after he had obtained it, or exert it with more moderation. He is the only instance that ever fell within my memory or observation of a person passing from a private life, through the several stages of greatness, without any perceivable impression upon his temper or behaviour.” And in a confidential letter to Archbishop King he writes of him as “much the greatest minister I ever knew: regular in life, with a true sense of religion, an excellent scholar, and a good divine; of a very mild and affable disposition, intrepid in his notions, and indefatigable in business, an utter despiser of money for himself, yet frugal, perhaps to an extremity, for the public.” The “Journal to Stella,” the good faith of which is above suspicion, is crowded with passages referring to Harley in terms of the most reverential affection.

It must be confessed that there was little in Harley's character or achievements to warrant such extravagant laudations.

Robert Harley is one of many instances which prove that success in English politics is far more easily ob-

tained by mediocre abilities, coupled with a conventional type of character, than by original talent or transcendent energy. He was not a great orator; he was incapable of rapid and clear decision; he could lay no claim to constructive statesmanship. Yet as speaker of three parliaments, at a time when the speaker was far more of a partisan than now, he had made no enemies. Devoid of personal animosity he was well fitted, as chief minister, to reconcile the discordant interests which occasionally arise in every cabinet. When once convinced of the right political method he followed it up with extraordinary pertinacity. He had great presence of mind, and his calm bearing in moments of personal danger extorted the admiration of the severest critics. A good husband and father, and a sincere Christian in morals and religion, he enjoyed the thorough confidence of that great middle class, which though, at that time, unable to take much direct part in politics, could yet make its opinion felt with powerful effect whenever necessary. He loved the society of men of letters, who repaid his patronage by many a panegyric. We are told that he drank largely of claret—a practice which, while it dulled his brain, increased the natural geniality of his bearing; and few of his associates, especially if of lower rank than himself, were able to resist the charm of his familiar intercourse.

It would have been impossible to find a greater contrast to Harley than his brilliant young colleague, Henry St. John, better known by his title of Lord Bolingbroke. The character drawn of the latter by Swift is so excellent in style that it may be reproduced entire.

“It happens to very few men, in any age or country, to come into the world with so many advantages of nature and fortune as the late Secretary Bolingbroke: descended

from the best families in England, heir to a great patrimonial estate, of a sound constitution, and a most graceful, amiable person: but all these, had they been of equal value, were infinitely inferior in degree to the accomplishments of his mind, which was adorned with the choicest gifts that God has yet thought fit to bestow upon the children of men; a strong memory, a clear judgment, a vast range of wit and fancy, a thorough comprehension, an invincible eloquence, with a most agreeable elocution. He had well cultivated all these talents by travel and study, the latter of which he seldom omitted even in the midst of his pleasures, of which he had indeed been too great and criminal a pursuer; for although he was persuaded to leave off intemperance in wine, which he did for some time to such a degree that he seemed rather abstemious, yet he was said to allow himself other liberties, which can by no means be reconciled to religion or morals, whereof I have reason to believe he began to be sensible. But he was fond of mixing pleasure and business, and of being esteemed excellent at both; upon which account he had a great respect for the characters of Alcibiades and Petronius, especially the latter, whom he would be gladly thought to resemble. His detractors charged him with some degree of affectation, and perhaps not altogether without grounds; since it was hardly possible for a young man, with half the business of the nation upon him and the applause of the whole, to escape some tincture of that infirmity. He had been early bred to business, was a most artful negotiator, and perfectly understood foreign affairs. But what I have often wondered at in a man of his temper was his prodigious application whenever he thought it necessary; for he would plod whole days and nights like the lowest clerk in an office. His talent of speaking in public, for which

he was so very celebrated, I know nothing of except from the informations of others; but understanding men of both parties have assured me that, in this point, in their memory and judgment, he was never equalled."

It would be impossible to more finely appreciate St. John's abilities than is done in the above. But Swift's was a suspicious nature, and he never extended to St. John the love and confidence he reposed in Harley. In the "Journal to Stella" he describes the former as "the greatest young man" he ever met. He praises his ability, but he notes the secretary's affected air of overwork; and he comments unfavourably on his attempt to mix the man of business and the man of pleasure. "What truth and sincerity he may have," Swift concludes, "I know not." Swift's judgment on the two leading statesmen is thus somewhat conventional. Brilliance is not necessarily associated with perfidy. St. John, it is true, was inclined to look on the world as a great stage, on which he was playing a prominent and dashing part. But there has ever been a want of the picturesque in English politics, and an unprejudiced reader will feel real gratitude to the statesman who endeavoured to supply it.

The Tory ministry possessed a large majority in the House of Commons. It was in high favour at court; and it had a definite political aim in the attainment of peace. The ministerial party however was far from harmonious. Harley, a man of moderate views, had no sympathy with party feeling and wished to establish his government on a wide basis of general support. The leading financiers, moreover, were Whigs to a man, and the need of heavy loans to carry on the service of the year rendered conciliation absolutely necessary. Such a course did not please the extreme Tories, who clamoured for revenge. They were known as the October Club, from the October

beer in which they nightly drank damnation to the Whigs. The queen's favour, lastly, was very uncertain. Mrs. Masham was a vigilant guardian of Tory interests; but to win the easy-tempered Anne's confidence was very easy, and the knowledge that she might veer round at any time was a constant source of alarm to the Tory ministers. The whole situation is admirably summed up by Swift: "This kingdom is as certainly ruined as much as ever was any bankrupt merchant. We must have peace, let it be a bad or a good one, though nobody dares talk of it. The nearer I look upon things the worse I like them. I believe the confederacy will soon break to pieces, and our factions at home increase. The ministry is upon a very narrow bottom, and stands like an isthmus between the Whigs on one side and the violent Tories on the other. They are able seamen, but the tempest is too great, and the ship too rotten, and the crew all against them. . . . They have cautioned the queen so much against being governed, that she observes it too much."

In view of the above circumstances the Government resolved to begin operations by following a middle course. They determined to show their gratitude to the Church without pressing too hardly on the Dissenters; to undermine the Whig commander-in-chief, Marlborough, in public estimation, but to allow him to retain his post in return for political support; to impress upon the October Club the absolute necessity of moderation; and lastly to bring about a change in public opinion regarding the war with France.

All these points are well brought out by Swift in *The Examiner*, a weekly paper conducted by him from November 2, 1710 to June 14, 1711. The line he took was bold, original, and effective. Discarding the ordinary methods of political controversy he appealed to his countrymen in

the name of patriotism ; not of party. The Revolution of 1688 he maintained had not changed the fundamental constitution of the country. The Crown was still entitled to take its part in the work of government ; its duty being to choose as counsellors the best and most trustworthy men, irrespective of any private faction to which they might belong. How absurd, then, to revile the queen for the recent ministerial revolution. " Why should not a revolution in the ministry be sometimes necessary, as well as a revolution in the Crown ? " asked Swift, with a clever hit at one of the best-known Whig professions. Had not a large majority of the people shown their approval of the change by sending a Tory majority to parliament ? The Whigs affected to believe in the voice of the people. Why, then, their opposition now ? The reason was this :

Shortly after the Revolution of 1688 a body of men, now represented by the present Whig leaders, had entered the political world. Forming themselves into an exclusive faction, into which no man unable to utter their unmeaning shibboleths could enter, they had drawn the power and wealth of the whole state into their hands. The Whig claim to speak in the name of the country was an absurdity too gross to require refutation.

" I do not take the heads, advocates, and followers of the Whigs," he writes in *Examiner*, No. 36, " to make up, strictly speaking, a national party ; being patched up of heterogeneous, inconsistent parts, whom nothing served to unite but the common interest of sharing in the spoil and plunder of the people ; the present dread of their adversaries, by whom they apprehended to be called to an account ; and that general conspiracy of endeavouring to overturn Church and State ; which, however, if they could have compassed, they would certainly have fallen out among themselves, and broke in pieces, as their prede-

cessors did after they destroyed the monarchy and religion. For how could a Whig, who is against all discipline, agree with a Presbyterian, who carries it higher than the papists themselves? How could a Socinian adjust his models to either? Or how could any of these cement into a deist or freethinker, when they have to consult upon points of faith? Neither would they have agreed better in their systems of government. Where some would have been for a king under the limitations of a Duke of Venice; others for a Dutch republic; a third party for an aristocracy; and most of all for some new fabric of their own contriving."

"The most cursory examination of the Whigs," he goes on to say, "will show them to possess all the characteristics of a discreditable faction. They associate themselves with those who dislike the old Establishment, religious and civil. They are full of new schemes in politics and divinity; they have an incurable hatred against the old nobility, and strengthen their party by dependants raised from the lowest of the people. They have several ways of working themselves into power; but they are sure to be called when a corrupt administration wants to be supported against those who are endeavouring at a reformation: and they firmly observe that celebrated maxim of preserving power by the same arts by which it is attained."¹

On the arrogance and ambition of the Whig leaders Swift lays special stress. Putting the monarchy in tutelage to themselves they had "spread a huge, invisible net between prince and subject." A government should pride itself upon its national and conciliatory character. The Whig leaders, on the other hand, "went on daily

¹ *Examiner*, No. 32, March 8, 1711.

narrowing their terms of communion, pronouncing nine parts in ten of the kingdom heretics, and shutting them out of the pale of the Church. These very men, who talk so much of comprehension in religion among us, how came they to allow so little of it in politics, which is their sole religion ? ”

The ministerial change of 1710 had been an attempt to substitute a really national government for the system of subservience to a grasping gang of political adventurers. “ Things were grown to such a height that it was no longer the question whether a person, who aimed at an employment, were a Whig or a Tory ; much less whether he had merit or proper abilities for what he pretended to: he must owe his preferment only to favourites ; and the Crown was so far from nominating, that they would not allow it a negative.” Was not, then, the queen right in emancipating herself from so iniquitous a bondage ? “ I believe,” says Swift, “ that a prince thus treated by those he has most confided in, and perpetually loaded with his favours, ought to extricate himself as soon as possible, and is then only blamable in his choice of the time when he defers one minute after it is in his power ; because from the monstrous encroachments of exorbitant avarice and ambition, he cannot tell how long it may continue to be so. And it will be found upon inquiring into history that most of those princes who have been ruined by favourites have owed their misfortunes to the neglect of earlier remedies: deferring to struggle till quite sunk.”

Having thus exposed the character and designs of the defeated party Swift turned to the defence of the new Government.

In *The Examiner*, No. 27, published February 1, 1711, Swift eulogises the new Tory ministers in such a way as to

make at the same time a series of bitter personal attacks on their predecessors.

Regarding Sir Simon Harcourt he says: "Was any man ever more eminent in his profession than the present lord keeper? . . . It must be granted that he is wholly ignorant in the speculative as well as practical part of polygamy; he knows not how to metamorphose a sober man into a lunatic; he is no freethinker in religion, nor has courage to be patron of an atheistical book, while he is guardian of the queen's conscience. Although, after all, to speak in my private opinion, I cannot think these such mighty objections to his character as some would pretend."

After giving a summary of Harley's merits he concludes: "With all these virtues, it must be granted there is some mixture of human infirmity. His greatest admirers must confess his skill at cards and dice to be very low and superficial; in horse-racing he is utterly ignorant; then, to save a few millions to the public, he never regards how many worthy citizens he hinders from making their plum."

Of Mr. St. John he remarks: "It is to be lamented that he has not yet procured himself a busy, important countenance, nor learned that profound part of wisdom to be difficult of access. Besides, he has clearly mistaken the true use of books, which he has thumbed and spoiled with reading, when he ought to have multiplied them on his shelves; not like a great man of my acquaintance, who knew a book by the back better than a friend by the face, although he had never conversed with the former, and often with the latter."

Swift knew that revolutions are not made by rose-water, and he paid back his ruder opponents full measure in their own coin. For the talent of abuse he had a natural

genius; and woe betide those who, in this important branch of political life, essayed to break a lance with so fell an adversary! His "Character of Thomas, Earl of Wharton" stands pre-eminent among the abusive pamphlets of the time:

"Thomas, Earl of Wharton, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, by the force of a wonderful constitution has some years passed his grand climacteric without any visible effects of old age either on his body or his mind, and in spite of a continual prostitution to those vices which usually wear out both. . . . He seems to be but an ill-dissembler and an ill-liar, although they are the two talents he most practises and most values himself upon.¹ The ends he has gained by lying appear to be more owing to the frequency than the art of them, his lies being detected sometimes in an hour, often in a day, and always in a week. . . . He swears solemnly he loves and will serve you; and your back is no sooner turned but he tells those about him that you are a dog and a rascal. He goes constantly to prayers in the forms of his place and talks blasphemy at the chapel door. . . . He bears the gallantries of his lady with the indifference of a stoic. . . . With a good natural understanding, a great fluency in speaking, and no ill-taste of wit, he is generally the worst companion in the world; his thoughts being wholly taken up between vice and politics, so that lewdness, profaneness, and business fill up his whole conversation."

So much for personal character. On the iniquities of Wharton's public career Swift dilated at great length. He accused him of the grossest corruption in his office as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Wharton, according to the

¹ This may be compared to Talleyrand's sarcasm on his rival Metternich. "M. de Metternich ment toujours, mais il ne trompe jamais."

pamphlet, had openly sold places in the administration ; he had made enormous sums out of Government contracts ; he had carried on peculation in the pettier details of his office ; and he had given Dr. Lloyd¹ rich Church preferment, because that ecclesiastic married his cast-off mistress. In No. 18, of *The Examiner*, Swift, assuming the character of Cicero, uttered an imaginary speech against Verres, the evil governor of Sicily. Under Verres, Wharton, under Sicily, Ireland, will be at once understood :

“MY LORDS,—We bring before you in judgment, a public robber, an adulterer, a defiler of altars, an enemy of religion and of all that is sacred. In Sicily he sold all employments of judicature, magistracy, and trust, places in the council, and the priesthood itself, to the highest bidder ; and has plundered that island of forty millions of sesterces. And here I cannot but observe to your lordships how Verres passed the day ; the morning was spent in taking bribes and selling employments—the rest of it in drunkenness and lust. His discourse at table was scandalously unbecoming the dignity of his station ; noise, brutality, and obscenity. One particular I cannot omit : that in the high character of Governor of Sicily, upon a solemn day, a day set apart for public prayer for the safety of the commonwealth, he stole at evening in a chair to a married woman of infamous character, against all decency and prudence, as well as against all laws, both human and divine.”²

¹ See Chapter I, p. 7.

² It is amusing to compare with these diatribes the laudatory terms in which Wharton is spoken of in *The Spectator*. “My lord,” says the dedication prefixed to No. 323, “we admire some for the dignity, others for the popularity, of their behaviour ; some for their clearness of judgment, others for their happiness of expression ; some for the

Swift's defence of the ministerial policy in general is no less decided. He takes great credit for the high moral tone of their rule. Have they not voted a sum of money to build fifty new churches in the metropolis which the Whigs had practically left in spiritual destitution? On their economy he lays great stress. They are ready to continue the war if need be, but they say that this enormous increase of the national debt is a serious calamity, and they will therefore have no objection to entering on negotiations for peace as soon as favourable terms are offered. He confesses that the Government can lay no claim to the Whig merit of universal religious toleration? But is this necessarily a blessing? The Whigs accuse the Government of favouring popery. But, if any, it is the Whigs, who, by their doctrine of complete liberty of conscience, are in favour of this design. He praises the care shown by the Government for "the landed men"—the real backbone of the country; and he points out the beneficial character of certain minor ministerial measures—for instance, the attempt to stop the naturalisation of pauper foreigners.¹

Swift's close and novel alliance with the Tories had much disgusted his Whig friends Addison and Steele. Though, however, the latter were strong politicians, Swift tried hard to remain on good terms with them. On December 14, 1710, he writes: "Mr. Addison and I are different as black and white, and I believe our friendship

laying of schemes, and others for their execution. It is your lordship only who enjoys these several talents united, and that too in as great perfection as others possess them singly." Richard Steele, by whom this is written was a Whig; hence the different views taken by him and Swift.

¹ For the case of the immigrants from the Palatinate, see *Examiner*, No. 45 (June 7, 1711).

will go off by this damned business of party; he cannot bear seeing me fall in so with this ministry; but I love him still as well as ever, though we seldom meet." Unwilling to quarrel with literary associates, from whose ruin he had nothing to gain, Swift tried hard to persuade the Tory ministry to keep Steele in his post of gazetteer. Twice did he make appointments for an interview between Steele and the chief ministers. But it was not known in the memory of man that Richard Steele, Esq., ever kept an appointment. Steele did not appear, and his post was taken from him. Swift suggests in his *Journal* that Addison "hindered him out of mere spite, being grated to the soul to think he should ever want my help to save his friend."¹ For this charge there seems little foundation, but the alienation between Swift and Addison rapidly proceeded. On January 14, 1711, Swift met the latter accidentally at a coffee-house. The two talked coldly awhile. "All our friendship and dearness are off,"² Swift notes.

Yet even now we find him recommending Addison to the ministry. This again came to nothing.³ The coldness between Swift and his old friends, grew more marked, and before long he found himself completely estranged. On March 16, 1711, he writes: "I never see them (Addison and Steele); and I plainly told Mr. Harley and Mr. St. John ten days ago, before my lord keeper and Lord Rivers, that I had been foolish enough to spend my credit with them in favour of Addison and Steele; but that I would engage and promise never to say one word in their behalf, having been used so ill for what I had already done." With Addison Swift always maintained a polite though very frigid intercourse. Steele,

¹ *Journal*, December 15, 1710.

² *Ibid.*, January 14, 1711.

³ *Ibid.*, February 14, 1711.

as will be seen later on, became his bitter enemy. Some compensation for the loss of private friendships was, however, obtained by Swift in the close intimacy he now formed with the leading ministers. There were few nights in the week in which he did not dine with Harley or St. John, and spend the evening in discussing the situation with his hosts.

His determination to be treated as an equal by his patrons is constantly evidenced from passages in the *Journal*. He hoped in return for his services to be offered some rich preferment later on. But he was resolved not to accept the wages of an ordinary hireling.

On one occasion Harley sent him a bank-note for fifty pounds. Swift sent it back through Harley's secretary, Erasmus Lewis, accompanied by a strong protest. Harley saw his mistake, and sent a letter to Lewis, expressing his regret at what had occurred. But this was not enough for Swift. "I was deaf to all entreaties," he wrote in the *Journal*,¹ "and have desired Lewis to go to him and let him know that I expected further satisfaction. If we let these great ministers pretend too much, there will be no governing them. He promises to make me easy if I will but come and see him; but I will not, and he shall do it by message, or I will cast him off." Harley readily performed the required humiliation, and Swift, to use his own words, consented to "take him into favour again."² "I went to Mr. Harley's," he writes on February 16, 1711, "who was not gone to dinner; there I stayed till nine, and he has invited me to dinner to-morrow, which is the day of the week (Saturday) that lord keeper and Secretary St. John dine with him privately, and at last they have consented to let me dine among them on that day." This

¹ *Journal*, February 7, 1711.

² *Ibid.*, February 13, 1711.

was in reality a very great triumph. The triumvirate above mentioned formed a kind of inner cabinet, the Saturday night dinners being specially devoted to important political consultation. His admittance thereto, which was regularly maintained, thus placed Swift in the most complete confidence of his patrons.

With Harley Swift rarely quarrelled. That minister's simple bearing and genial temper completely won Swift's heart. To the last, however, he was unable to overcome his feeling of distrust towards the more brilliant St. John. One of the quarrels between them is referred to at great length in the Journal. On April 1, 1711, Swift dined with the secretary and found him very silent and reserved. Swift was resolved not to put up with even an unintentional slight. On April 3, 1711, we find in his diary the following interesting passage: "I called at Mr. Secretary to see what the devil ailed him on Sunday; I made him a very proper speech; told him 'I observed he was much out of temper: that I did not expect he would tell me the cause, but would be glad to see he was in better'; and one thing I warned him of, 'never to appear cold to me, for I would not be treated like a schoolboy; that I had felt too much of that in my life already (meaning Sir William Temple), that I expected every great minister, who honoured me with his acquaintance, if he heard or saw anything to my disadvantage, would let me know in plain words, and not put me in pain to guess by the change or coldness of his countenance or behaviour; for it was what I would hardly bear from a crowned head, and I thought no subject's favour was worth it; and that I designed to let my lord keeper and Mr. Harley know the same thing, that they might use me accordingly.' He took all right; said 'I had reason'; vowed 'nothing ailed him but sitting up whole nights at business, and one night at



H. Regaud, pinx.

Dawson, p. h. sc.

Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke.

TO WHOM IT MAY COME
ALL HAIL

drinking'; would have had me dine with him and Mrs. Masham's brother, to make up matters, but I would not." St. John's amends were ultimately accepted, but the great difference in age, tastes, and character between him and Swift always placed a bar between the two.

Of the history of the time and the part played therein by Swift himself, from day to day, we have a minute record in the "Journal to Stella." Parliament had met on November 25, 1710. A vote of thanks to Marlborough for the successes of the recent campaign was negatived. General Cadogan, his favourite, was recalled from the post of envoy to the Dutch Republic and succeeded by Lord Orrery, an enemy of the duke. Three general officers in Flanders, moreover, named Meredyth, Macartney, and Honeywood, were cashiered for drinking damnation to the Tory Government: "dressing up a hat on a stick and calling it Harley; then drinking a glass with one hand and discharging a pistol with the other at the manikin, wishing it were Harley himself!"^{*}

On December 28th Marlborough returned to England. St. John had declared he was perfectly willing to act cordially with him "if he would disengage himself from the Whigs and put a stop to the rage and fury of his wife." The latter task, unfortunately, was quite beyond the duke's power. His calmness on the battle-field extorted the admiration of every soldier of the time. Before his wife, however, he trembled like a schoolboy "sent up" for punishment.

Though not unfriendly to the duke, the ministry were determined to remove the queen from the duchess's influence. The latter, who loved wealth and place as dearly as her lord, held the three court offices of mistress of the

^{*} Journal, December 13, 1710.

robes, keeper of the privy purse, and, rather strangely, groom of the stole. To retain these posts for his wife the Duke struggled with desperation. As soon as possible after his arrival he had an interview with St. John. He lamented his former wrong steps in joining the Whigs. He told the secretary that he was worn out with age, fatigues, and misfortunes. When taxed regarding his wife, he confessed she had acted strangely. But, he pleaded, "A man must bear with a good deal to be quiet at home." After some negotiation the duchess offered, "if they would let her keep her employments, never to come into the queen's presence."¹ But the offer was too absurd to be accepted. In vain did the duke, in an interview with the queen on January 17, 1711, fall on his knees, and implore a continuance of the royal favour for his wife. Queen Anne was thoroughly weary of the duchess's violence, and had resolved once and for all to put a stop to it. With a refinement of cruelty she told Marlborough to go to his wife and bring back the gold key which was the symbol of her offices. In fear and trembling the duke crept home. He entered his wife's room and told her of the failure of his mission. Taking the key from her side the duchess flung it on the floor and bade him carry it to whom he pleased.

The duchess retired finally from court. Her offices of mistress of the robes and groom of the stole were given to the Duchess of Somerset; the privy purse was entrusted to Mrs. Masham. Marlborough's own dismissal was hourly expected. But the Tories were satisfied with getting rid of the duchess; the duke was allowed to remain commander-in-chief, and on February 18, 1711, he again returned to the seat of war.

¹ Journal, January 12, 1711.

Swift, writing in his *Journal*, declares he felt quite sorry for the duke's troubles, and blames his friends for being too hard upon him. This confession, however, accords ill with his public behaviour.¹ For the passages in *The Examiner*, in which Marlborough was at this time mentioned, are specially noticeable for their virulence. On November 23, 1710, Swift published a malignant diatribe, in which an elaborate comparison was made between the rewards obtained by the duke and those given to a successful Roman general, as follows:—

<i>A bill of Roman gratitude.</i>				<i>A bill of British ingratitude.</i>			
	£	s.	d.				
For frankincense and earthen pots to burn it in	4	10	0	Woodstock	£40,000		
A bull for sacrifice...	8	0	0	Blenheim	200,000		
An embroidered garment	50	0	0	Post-office grant...	100,000		
A crown of laurel ...	0	0	2	Mildenheim... ..	30,000		
A statue	100	0	0	Pictures, jewels, &c. ...	60,000		
A trophy	80	0	0	Pall Mall grant	10,000		
A thousand copper medals, value half-penny apiece ...	2	1	8	Employments	100,000 ²		
A triumphal arch ...	500	0	0				
A triumphal car, valued as a modern coach	100	0	0				
Casual charges of triumph	150	0	0				
Total... ..	£994	11	10	Total	£540,000		

¹ *Journal*, December 31, 1710, and January 7, 1711.

² This is a gross exaggeration. The official emoluments of the duke and duchess taken together, at the height of their power, amounted to £59,325 per annum. For the details see Stanhope's "History of England," chap. i.

The whole of *Examiner*, No. 21, published December 21, 1710, is devoted to a commentary on Marlborough's request to be made captain-general for life. Was not this, Swift endeavours to show, a deliberate attempt to follow in the steps of Cromwell, and set up a military despotism? *Examiner* No. 28, published February 8, 1711, *i.e.*, a day after Swift noted in his diary that "I think our friends press a little too hard on the Duke of Marlborough," is the most malignant of all. Writing in the classical style which he employed with such effect against Lord Wharton, Swift indites an imaginary letter to Crassus, the wealthiest and most avaricious of the Romans. The analogy with Marlborough is carefully observed throughout.

"To MARCUS CRASSUS, health,— . . . You are the richest person in the commonwealth; you have no male child; your daughters are all married to wealthy patriicians; you are far in the decline of life, and yet you are deeply stained with that odious and ignoble vice of covetousness. . . . Disguise your person, go among the common people of Rome, introduce discourses about yourself; inquire into your own character; do the same in your camp; walk about in the evening; hearken at every tent; and if you do not hear every mouth censuring, lamenting, cursing this vice in you, and even you for this vice, conclude yourself innocent. . . ." Swift then goes on to accuse Marlborough of refusing the terms of peace offered by Louis in 1708, and of confining the war to the Netherlands, solely and simply to fill his own pockets. "They (the army) would have desired you to lead them to the utmost limits of Asia (*i.e.*, to hurry on the invasion of France). But you rather chose to confine your conquests within the fruitful country of Mesopotamia (the Netherlands), where plenty of money might be raised.

How far that fatal greediness of gold may have influenced you in breaking off the treaty with the old Parthian king Orodes (Louis XIV.), you best can tell ; your enemies charge you with it ; your friends offer nothing material in your defence ; and all agree there is nothing so pernicious which the extremes of avarice may not be able to inspire."

On coming into office the ministry had announced their intention of carrying on the war with vigour in all quarters, but especially in Spain ; such being the best means of bringing France to terms.¹ Circumstances, however, soon forced them to give up this bold resolve. In December, 1710, the allied forces in Spain suffered two defeats at the hands of the French general, Vendôme, at Brihuega and Villa Viciosa. It was obvious that even if the allied army in Flanders succeeded in forcing their way to Paris they would never obtain Spain for the Archduke Charles. The nation had long lost interest in the war. So great was the need of peace for France, that England could demand most favourable terms for herself from the latter power. The enormous expense of the war caused an annual deficit, which had to be made up by loans ; and this could not go on for ever.

" We have nothing to save us but a peace," says Swift as early as January 7, 1711. Before that date, however, the ministry, without letting Swift into the secret, had opened negotiations. There was then in England a certain Abbé Gaultier, private chaplain to Marshal Tallard, the French general taken prisoner at Blenheim in 1704. The ministry resolved to employ him as a preliminary agent ; and armed only with verbal instructions for greater security he left

¹ England's allies were Holland, Austria, Savoy, and the North German States. They wished to obtain for the Archduke Charles of Austria the Spanish dominions, which had been bequeathed by Charles II. of Spain to Louis XIV.'s grandson, Philip, Duke of Anjou.

London early in January. He landed at Nieuport on January 15th, and travelled thence as quickly as possible to Versailles, where he made known his object to the French Government. A peace policy once resolved on, it remained to make the idea familiar to the nation in general. At a hint from St. John, *The Examiner* began to thunder against the war. It was described as nothing but a gigantic conspiracy, devised and maintained for the purpose of keeping the Whigs in office. In No. 24, dated January 11, 1711, Swift writes as follows: "It is not obvious to conceive what could move men, who sat at home, and were called to consult upon the good of the kingdom, to be so utterly averse from putting an end to a long and expensive war, which the victorious as well as the conquered side were heartily weary of. Few or none of them were men of the sword; they had no share in the honour; they had made large fortunes, and were at the head of all affairs. But they well knew by what tenure they held their power; that the queen saw through their designs; that they had entirely lost the hearts of the clergy; that the landed men were against them; that they were detested by the body of the people; and that nothing bore them up but their credit with the bank and other stocks, which would be neither formidable nor necessary when the war was at an end. For these reasons they resolved to resist all overtures of a peace,¹ until they and their party should be so deeply rooted as to make it impossible to shake them."

It was obvious that this sudden change in foreign policy would be bitterly opposed. But, fortunately for the ministry, an event now took place which raised Harley to the highest point of popularity. On March 8, 1711, a French renegade in the pay of the English Government, named

¹ Referring to the refusal of Louis' offers in 1706 and 1708.

Giscard, was discovered in secret correspondence with France. He was arrested and brought to Whitehall for examination by the privy council. Maddened at an exposure which meant utter ruin, the poor wretch suddenly drew a penknife, which he had snatched up on his way to the council chamber, rushed at Harley and stabbed him in the breast. The prime minister fell to the ground. St. John and the Duke of Newcastle drew their swords and attacked the assassin, inflicting on him several severe wounds before he could be secured by the attendants. Harley's wound was not deep. Sarcastic Whig pamphleteers, indeed, stated that the prime minister's waistcoat had suffered far more than his skin. But he was in bad health, and the shock of the assault for the time completely prostrated him.

Had Harley's danger been more severe, it would have received ample compensation in the flood of popularity which now poured down upon him. The English people have ever had a deep horror of assassination. During the week that Harley lay in danger his virtues were the universal theme of conversation. The voice of detraction was completely hushed. On April 13th Harley was able to see visitors. He went for a short change of air to the country, and on April 26th made his reappearance in the House of Commons. Amidst the applause of the House the speaker made him a long and elaborate address of congratulation. Of the minister's popularity and success there was now no doubt. His financial statement, brought forward on May 2nd, was carried without demur. On May 24th he was created Earl of Oxford, and on May 29th he was raised to the great dignity of lord treasurer. Swift was delighted. "This man (Harley)," he writes, "has grown by persecutions, turnings out, and stabbing. What waiting, and crowding, and bowing there will be at

his *levée* ! Yet, if human nature be capable of so much constancy, I should believe he will be the same man still, bating the necessary forms of grandeur he must keep up."

The affair well brought out the sincere affection with which Harley's simple character had inspired Swift. "My heart is almost broken," he writes to Stella, on hearing the news. Several times a day he goes to inquire after the minister's progress. Stella must not expect to get any long letters till Harley is out of danger. On March 12th he writes: "We have been in terrible pain to-day about Mr. Harley, who never slept last night, and has been very feverish. But this evening I called there, and young Mr. Harley (his only son) tells me he is now much better, and was then asleep. They let nobody see him, and that is perfectly right. . . . Pray God preserve him." On April 13th Harley was able to see visitors. Swift, who wrote a special account of the murderous attempt for the general public, notes with special affection Harley's cool demeanour throughout. "After the wound was given, he (Mr. Harley) was observed neither to change his countenance nor discover any concern nor disorder in his speech. . . . When the surgeon came, he took him aside and desired he would inform him freely whether the wound were mortal, because in that case, he said, he had some affairs to settle relating to his family. The blade of the penknife, broken by the violence of the blow against the rib, within a quarter of an inch from the handle, was dropped out (I know not whether from the wound or his clothes) as the surgeon was going to dress him: he ordered it to be taken up, and wiping it himself gave it to somebody to keep, saying he thought it now properly belonged to him. He showed no sort of resentment, nor spoke one violent word against Guiscard, but appeared all the while the least concerned of any in the company—a

state of mind which in such an exigency nothing but innocence can give, and is truly worthy of a Christian philosopher.”¹

The immediate result of the attempt on Harley was to give the ministry greatly increased confidence.

On May 3, 1711, Lord Rochester, who held the office of privy seal, died suddenly. After some delay he was succeeded in his post by the Bishop of Bristol. The nomination of an ecclesiastic to a political office excited great surprise. Swift, who thought the days of Wolsey were about to return, was in great glee. “The Bishop of Bristol is made privy seal,” he writes to Stella. “You know his name is Robinson, and that he was many years envoy in Sweden. All the friends of the present ministry are extreme glad, and the clergy above the rest. The Whigs will fret to death to see a civil employment given to a clergyman. It was a very handsome thing in my lord treasurer, and will bind the Church to him for ever.”

By the end of April, 1711, the French and English Governments had agreed to open negotiations for peace. In June Matthew Prior was secretly despatched to Paris with short instructions, signed by the queen herself. A preliminary agreement was arranged after some discussion; and by the end of August Prior returned accompanied by a French agent, M. Mesnager, with full power to sign the articles on behalf of the French king. Of this negotiation Swift was kept entirely ignorant. On landing at Dover, however, Prior was arrested by mistake as a smuggler, and forced to reveal his name.

Suspicion of the ministerial designs had long existed, and a tremendous outcry now arose. Prior was Bolingbroke's intimate friend. His journey to France must therefore have had only one object. Immediately the

¹ *Examiner*, No. 33, March 15, 1711.



Pin. G. Kneller, pinx.

Dawson sc.

J. Faber sc.

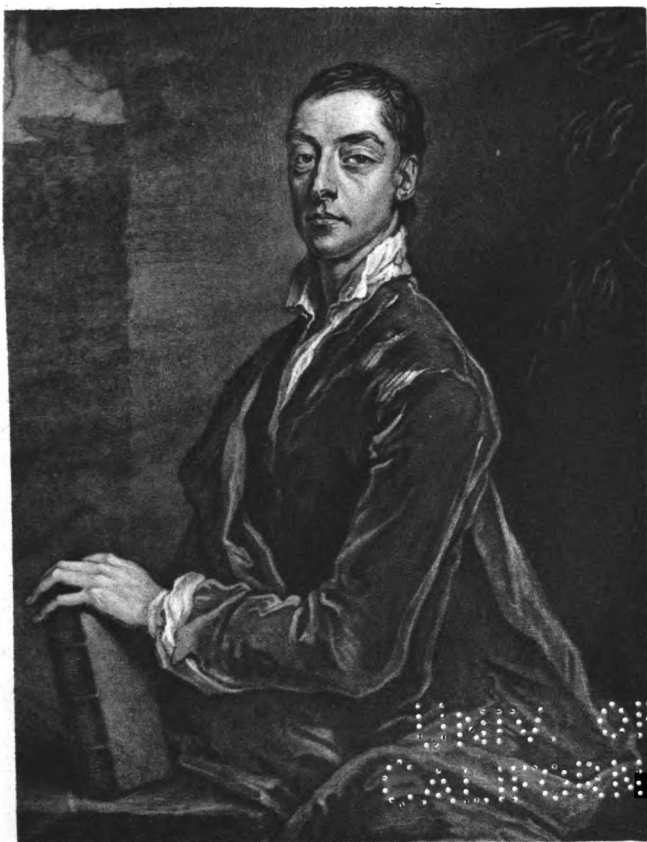
Matthew Prior.

Whig press poured forth a flood of pamphlets on the subject. The most minute details were given of Prior's journey from London to Paris. His very conversations with the French king, with Madame de Maintenon, with M. de Torcy, were reported to the letter. Swift promptly retaliated by an amusing little tract, entitled, "A New Journey to Paris; together with some Secret Transactions between the French King and an English Gentleman." A pure invention from beginning to end it purported to be a translation from the French of M. de Baudrier, Prior's secretary. Written in an ironical style it was intended to ridicule the portentous Whig diatribes. The circumstantial details given by the latter are burlesqued with exquisite fidelity. In a solemn preface Swift points out that M. de Baudrier seems to have been only a valet, not a secretary. He was not, therefore, completely in his master's secrets. In compensation, however, he informs the reader of many important particulars which a person of more consequence would not have noticed. The author begins by describing with extraordinary minuteness the manner of Mr. Prior's journey from London to Boulogne. At the latter place he met the French minister, M. de Torcy, who was staying, under the assumed name of M. de la Bastide, "at a private house in the Fauxbourgs . . . over against the Hôtellerie St. Jean." Various conferences were held at Boulogne, and on Sunday, July 18th, the two plenipotentiaries set out for Paris. "A small *valise*, which I suppose contained Mr. Prior's instructions, he was pleased to trust to my care, to carry on horseback; which trust I discharged with the utmost faithfulness. Somewhere above two leagues from Boulogne, at a small village called Neile, the axletree broke, which took us two hours to mend; we waited at Montreuil, and lay that night at Abbeville. But I shall not give you any detail



Portrait of...

press printed and a flood of pamphlets on the subject. The most celebrated of these were given off Prior's name, and were written in French. The very conversation between the French minister, M. de Maintenon, and the English ambassador, Sir John Wandesford, Swift promptly reprinted, and gave it the title tract entitled, "A New Journey to France, containing some secret Transactions between the French King and an English Gentleman." A French translation, beginning to call it purported to be a translation of the French of M. de Boudrier, Prior's secretary. As it was in an ironical style it was intended to ridicule the politicians Whig distemper. The circumstances of details given by the latter are burlesqued with exquisite felicity. In a solemn preface Swift points out that M. de Boudrier seems to have been only a valet, not a secretary. He was not, therefore, completely in his master's confidence; in compensation, however, he informs the reader of some important particulars which a person of more confidence would not have noticed. The author begins his narrative with extraordinary minuteness the manner of his master's journey from London to Boulogne. At the same place he met the French minister, M. de Tonnepierre, who was staying, under the assumed name of M. de Boudrier, "at a private house in the Fauxbourgs . . . called the Hôtellerie St. Jean." Various conferences were held at Boulogne, and on Sunday, July 18th, the French representatives set out for Paris. "A small paper, which I suppose contained Mr. Prior's instructions, was intrusted to my care, to carry on horseback; which I discharged with the utmost faithfulness. About the above two leagues from Boulogne, at a small village called Nolle, the axle-tree broke, which took us two hours to mend; we waited at Montreuil, and lay that night at Abbeville. But I shall not give you any detail



F. Kneller pinx.

Dawson sc.

J. Faber sc.

Matthew Prior.

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of our journey, which passed without any considerable accident till we arrived within four leagues of Paris; when, about three in the afternoon, two cavaliers, well mounted, and armed with pistols, crossed the road, then turned short, and rode up briskly to the chaise, commanding the coachman to stop. M. de la Bastide's two attendants were immediately up with them; but I, who guessed at the importance of the charge that Monsieur Prior had entrusted me with, though I was in no fear for my own person, thought it most prudent to advance with what speed I could to a small village, about a quarter of a league forward, to wait the event. I soon observed the chaise come on without any disturbance, and I ventured to meet it; when I found that it was only a frolic of two young cadets of quality, who had been making a debauch at a friend's house hard by, and were returning to Paris; one of them was not unknown to M. de la Bastide. The two cavaliers began to rally me, said 'I knew how to make a retreat,' with some other pleasantries; but Monsieur Prior (who knew the cause) highly commended my discretion. We continued our journey very merrily, and arrived at Paris on Tuesday, the 20th, in the cool of the evening." On the following day the party go to Versailles. Monsieur Prior has an audience of the king and Madame de Maintenon. They spend the evening at a house in the neighbourhood. "The house being small," says the narrator, "my apartment was divided from Mr. Prior's by a thin wainscot, so that I could easily hear what they said when they raised their voice, as they often did. After some time I could hear Monsieur de la Bastide say, with great warmth, 'Bon dieu! Were ever such demands made to a great monarch, unless you were at the gates of his metropolis?' . . . Monsieur Prior, who has a low voice, and had not

that occasion for passion, answered so softly that I could not well understand him; but upon parting I heard him say, 'If you insist still on these difficulties, my next audience will be that of leave!' Like the detective in a melodrama, M. de Baudrier next listens outside the garden of the Royal Palace. He hears the king say, 'Consider this night on what we have said to you.' To which Prior answers, 'Sir, all or nothing, as I have had the honour to tell your Majesty before.'" The cry of the Whigs that France was reduced to ruin and that one more campaign would complete her downfall, is exquisitely parodied. As they drive away from Paris "a comely person about fifty," all in rags, but with a mien that showed him to be of a good house, cried, "Sir, for the love of God, give something to the Marquis de Sourdis!" Prior exclaims that if the marquises are reduced to beggary, the miseries of France must be indeed great! This *jeu d'esprit* proved too subtle for English wits. Even Prior himself was tricked. He thought it another Whig libel, and called on the Government to put a stop to such outrages. This, however, only increased Swift's delight, who constantly chuckles over the subject in his "Journal to Stella."

On September 27th, eight preliminary articles of peace between England and France were signed in London by M. Mesnager and the English ministers. The matter had to be made public now, and, as might have been expected, excited a universal storm. The Dutch envoys protested that their country would be delivered up bound into the hands of France. The Austrian ambassador, Count Gallas, raged so furiously that he was forbidden to appear at court. The whole Whig party raised the cry of treason, Jacobitism, and surrender to our enemies!

November 17th, the anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's

accession, was wont at this time to be kept as a great national and Protestant festival. This year it was resolved to celebrate it with unusual tumult, as a sort of protest against the peace policy of the ministers. Large sums had been subscribed by the Whig leaders, and an attack on the private residences of Harley and St. John was openly threatened.¹ Before it could come off, however, the police made a raid on the office where preparations for the affair were being made. They carried off all the paraphernalia, including figures of "Pregnant nuns"; "Fat friars in their habits," streamers carried over their heads, with these words, "EAT AND PRAY"; and "the Pope under a magnificent canopy, accompanied by the Chevalier de St. George² on the left, and his counsellor the Devil on his right." The latter figure was made up to resemble Harley. A loud protest came from the Whigs, but the Government called out the troops and suppressed any attempt at disorder with a firm hand.

With parliament the ministry had yet to reckon. In the Commons the opposition was in a hopeless minority. They resolved therefore to concentrate their efforts on the House of Lords, where parties were much more evenly balanced. Circumstances, moreover, specially favoured the Whig prospects in this chamber. Lord Nottingham, a Tory, had been bitterly disgusted at his non-appointment to the office of privy seal on Lord Rochester's death. Resolved to be revenged he now made overtures to the Whigs, and after a long negotiation an arrangement was come to which throws curious light on the political morality of the time. Nottingham and some of his friends agreed to vote against the peace; in

¹ Journal, November 17, 1711.

² Name given to James Stuart, son of James II., and pretender to the English Crown. He was then resident in France.

return, the Whig peers agreed to support Nottingham's pet measure, the Act against Occasional Conformity.

Besides Nottingham, the Whigs succeeded in winning over the Duke of Somerset, who held the post of master of the horse. This was an important secession, for the Duchess of Somerset by her place at court enjoyed great influence over the queen, and a court intrigue was at that time of more moment than a general election.

On December 7th parliament met. The Queen's Speech mentioned with approval that a final treaty of peace with France was on the point of completion, "notwithstanding the arts of those who delight in war." An amendment to the Address in the Commons moved by Sir Robert Walpole was rejected by 232 to 106. In the Peers, though Anne herself was present, a long and fierce debate ensued. Lord Nottingham opened the attack on the Government in a bitter speech, and ended by proposing an amendment to the effect "that no peace could be safe or honourable to Great Britain or Europe if Spain and the West Indies were allotted to any branch of the house of Bourbon." The chief Whig Lords followed him with great effect. Besides Somerset, the Duke of Shrewsbury, who held the post of lord chamberlain, declared against the Government. But the House was hushed in expectation when Marlborough, who had returned from the seat of war a fortnight ago, arose to state his opinion. The duke had long looked forward with dread to the time when he must definitely declare for peace or war. But his identification with the Whig hostility to France had been too complete to allow of his adhesion to the Tories on the present occasion. After a short statement that the terms of peace suggested by the ministry were neither satisfactory nor honourable, he solemnly signified his assent to Nottingham's amendment. On a division being

taken, the Government was defeated by a majority of eight.¹

The immediate result of this defeat was to inspire the ministry with the utmost consternation. Their power rested largely on court influence, and the suspicion at once arose that the fickle queen was veering round to the Whigs. Swift especially was in grave alarm. He had spent the day with Mr. St. John. Having heard the news of the debate in the Lords, he went on the morning of December 8th to Mrs. Masham. "She had heard nothing of the thing being gone against us. It seems lord treasurer had been so negligent, that he was with the queen while the question was put in the House. I immediately told Mrs. Masham that either she and lord treasurer had joined with the queen to betray us, or that they two were betrayed by the queen: she protested solemnly that it was not the former, and I believed her; but she gave me some lights to suspect the queen is changed. For, yesterday, when the queen was going from the House, where she sat to hear the debate, the Duke of Shrewsbury, lord chamberlain, asked her, 'Whether he or the great chamberlain Lindsay ought to lead her out?' She answered short, 'Neither of you,' and gave her hand to the Duke of Somerset, who was louder than any in the House for the clause against the peace. She gave me one or two more instances of this sort, which convince me that the queen is false, or at least very much wavering. Mr. Masham² begged us to stay, because lord treasurer would call, and we were resolved to fall on him about his negligence in securing a majority. He came and appeared in good humour as usual, but I thought his countenance was much cast down. I rallied

¹ The numbers were 62 to 54.

² Created Lord Masham, December 31, 1711.

him, and desired him to give me his staff, which he did ; I told him if he would secure it me a week I would set all right ; he asked, How ? I said I would immediately turn Lord Marlborough, his two daughters, the Duke and Duchess of Somerset, and Lord Cholmondeley, out of all their employments ; and I believe he had not a friend but was of my opinion. Dr. Arbuthnot asked how he came not to secure a majority ? He could answer nothing, but that he could not help it if people would lie and forswear. A poor answer for a great minister . . . The Whigs are all in triumph ; they foretold how all this would be, but we thought it boasting. Nay, they said the parliament should be dissolved before Christmas, and perhaps it may : this is all your damned Duchess of Somerset's doings. I warned them of it nine months ago, and a hundred times since : the secretary always dreaded it. I told lord treasurer I should have the advantage of him ; for he would lose his head, and I should only be hanged, and so carry my body entire to the grave." ¹

Swift's Journal for the next few days rings with prophecies of the coming Tory downfall. He repeats his statement that the queen is false. Those "scoundrel, starving lords" would never have dared to vote as they did, had they not known that it would please her. Some declared the ministry would be dismissed in a week ; others at the end of the session : all agreed that its doom was fixed. At one time, Swift thinks of hurrying back to the seclusion of Laracor, saying, like Wolsey :—

"A weak old man, batter'd with storms of state,
Is come to lay his weary bones among you."

At another, he begs the secretary to find him some

¹ Journal, December 8, 1711.

appointment abroad before the hourly expected change. "I should hardly trust myself," he says, "to the mercy of my enemies while their anger is fresh."

Yet in the midst of these alarms the Earl of Oxford remained calm; and within a fortnight of the eventful debate it became evident that all would still be well. Such a result was largely due to the desperate energy of Swift himself. During the months of October and November he had been busy with "*The Conduct of the Allies*," a long political pamphlet on behalf of the peace. Published on November 27th, by December 18th it had reached a fifth edition, and its effect was seen in a wide increase of public sympathy with the ministers.

"*The Conduct of the Allies*" has none of the commanding eloquence, the high-souled passion, the philosophic wisdom which has made the errors of Burke more valuable than the truths of ordinary men. But for clearness of style and lucidity of argument it stands pre-eminent in political literature. Appealing solely to the reason Swift points out: 1. That we have engaged as principals in war when we should have acted only as auxiliaries. 2. That we spent all our vigour in pursuing that part of the war which could least answer the end we proposed by beginning it; and made no efforts at all where we could have most weakened the common enemy, and at the same time enriched ourselves. 3. That we suffered each of our allies, more especially Holland and Austria, to break every article in the treaties by which they were bound, and to lay all the real burden upon ourselves.

The third count is far the most effective part of the whole indictment. With a simple calmness characteristic of the bench rather than the bar, Swift enumerates in detail the frauds practised on England by her allies. On

national sentiment as such no stress is laid. The conduct of the allies is merely held up for examination and shown, piece by piece, to be a complete nullification of their own promises. The quotations from existing treaties are frequent and apposite, and not a single point is brought forward which may not be proved or disproved by chapter and verse. Even in those passages in which reference to principle is impossible to avoid, Swift's tone is that of a judge sternly commenting on the private conduct of some party to a suit. He repeats his statement made in *The Examiner*, that this continual craving for war against France has something more than national differences behind it. In other words, it is to a great extent a party move devised by the Whigs for their own special benefit. In the reign of William of Orange, he declares, the plan of carrying on war by means of a national debt was first started. The object of this was "to create a moneyed interest, that might in time vie with the landed interest, and of which the Whigs hoped to become the head." The Spanish succession war is merely a repetition of the old trickery; and its long duration has been due "to the mutual indulgence between our general (Marlborough) and the allies, wherein they both well found their accounts; to the fears of the money-changers, lest their tables should be overthrown; to the designs of the Whigs, who apprehended the loss of their credit and employments in a piece; and to those at home, who held their immoderate engrossments of power and favour by no other tenure than their own presumption upon the necessity of affairs."

The one brilliant passage in the pamphlet is intended as a counterblast to the cry against peace. Again Swift cleverly appeals from a political party to the nation at large: "It is the folly of too many to mistake the echo of

a London coffee-house for the voice of the kingdom. The city coffee-houses have been for some years filled with people whose fortunes depend upon the Bank, East India, or some other stock. Every new fund to these is like a new mortgage to a usurer, whose compassion for a young heir is exactly the same with that of a stock-jobber to the landed gentry. At the court end of the town the like places of resort are frequented either by men out of place, and consequently enemies to the present ministry, or by officers of the army; no wonder, then, if the general cry in all such meetings be against any peace, either with Spain or without, which in other words is no more than this, that discontented men desire another change of ministry; that soldiers would be glad to keep their commissions; and that the creditors have money still, and would have the debtors borrow on at the old extorting rate while they have any security."

Regarding the resolution of the Tory Government to allow the Duke of Anjou to remain King of Spain, he shows that this is rendered necessary by military reasons. As to the possibility of future union between the Bourbon powers, he points out that identity of blood is by no means synonymous with community of interest. The only alternative, moreover, is to win Spain for the Emperor Charles VI.* The latter already owns the hereditary Austrian States, and the addition of Spain will utterly destroy the balance of power in Europe. Lastly, he lays great stress on the magnificent territorial and commercial advantages secured to England by the articles of peace.

In conclusion he remarks: "The common question is:

* The Archduke Charles of Austria, claimant to the Spanish dominions in opposition to the Bourbon Duke of Anjou, succeeded to his brother, the Emperor Joseph's, possessions and dignities in April, 1711.

If we must surrender Spain, what have we been fighting for all this while? The answer is ready: We have been fighting for the ruin of the public interest and the advancement of a private. We have been fighting to raise the wealth and grandeur of a particular family, to enrich usurers and stock-jobbers, and to cultivate the pernicious designs of a faction by destroying the landed interest. The nation begins now to think these blessings are not worth fighting for any longer, and therefore desires a peace."

"The Conduct of the Allies" by no means exhausted Swift's energies at this period. Hardly a day passed without some ballad, tract, or parable against his enemies. Lord Nottingham's gaunt figure, gloomy face, and depressing manner had earned him the nickname of "Dismal"; and a few days after the debate of December 7th, Swift issued a ballad against him, written in true Grub Street style.

The introduction begins:—

"An orator *dismal* of *Nottinghamshire*,
Who has forty years let out his conscience to hire,
Out of zeal for his country and want of a place,
Is come up, *vi et armis*, to break the queen's peace."

Then follows a burlesque of the speech:—

"Whereas notwithstanding I am in great pain,
To hear we are making a peace without Spain;
But most noble senators, 'tis a great shame,
There should be a peace, whilst I'm *Not-in-game*."

The orator then ingenuously explains the reasons of his conversion:—

"The duke¹ show'd me all his fine house ; and the duchess
From her closet brought out a full purse in her clutches.

My long old-fashioned pocket was presently crammed,
And sooner than vote for a peace I'll be damned !"

He then goes on to curse the Tories for not appointing
him to office, and concludes :—

"Since the Tories have thus disappointed my hopes,
And will neither regard my figures nor tropes,
I'll speech against peace while *Dismal's* my name,
And be a true Whig while I'm *Not-in-game*."

Lord Nottingham soon heard of the speech, and complained of it in the House of Lords as a breach of privilege. This, however, made little difference to Swift, who, assisted by a crowd of agents—"under-spurleathers" or "hang-dogs" he styled them—continued the paper war with unbroken pertinacity.

His next effusion, written on December 23rd, and styled "The Windsor Prophecy" was directed against the Duchess of Somerset. On consideration, the Government decided against its publication, but not before a number of copies had been handed about. The *prophecy* purports to be a transcript from a manuscript two hundred years old, recently discovered at Windsor.

It begins by foretelling the day when, after a long and needless war, England is about to enter upon the blessings of peace :—

"Then shall the *tall, black, Daventry bird*
Speak against peace right many a word ;
And some shall admire his conyng wit,
For many good groats his tongue shall slit."

¹ *I.e.*, the Duke of Marlborough.

The "tall, black, Daventry bird" is Lord Nottingham, whose family name was Finch.

The poem then goes on :—

"But spite of the *Harpy* that crawls on all four,
There shall be peace, pardie, and war no more,
But England must cry alack and well-a-day,
If the stick be taken from the dead sea.
And, dear England, if ought I understond,
Beware of *Carrots* from *Northumberland*;
Carrots sown *Thynne* a deep root may get,
If so be they are in *Somer set*;
Their *Conyngs mark* thou ; for I have been told
They *assassine* when young, and *poison* when old."

"Root out these *Carrots*, O thou whose name
Is *backwards* and *forwards* always the same.
And keep close to thee always that name,
Which *backwards* and *forwards* is almost the same.
And, England, wouldst thou be happy still,
Bury those *Carrots* under a *Hill*."

The explanation of these mystic words is as follows : The Harpy is the Duke of Marlborough. The stick is the lord treasurer's staff, then in the hands of Lord Oxford, whose second title, Baron Mortimer, lends itself to the punning translation "dead sea" (*morte mer*). *Carrots* is the Duchess of Somerset, who had red hair. She is described as "a most insinuating woman," at heart a Whig; and the Tories were having the same anxiety of her influence as they had had in the case of the Duchess of Marlborough. Daughter and heiress of the great Earl Percy of Northumberland, she was first married, in her fourteenth year, to Lord Ogle. He died in 1680, and in 1681 she married Thomas Thynne of Longleat. In February, 1682, Thynne was assassinated by the agents of Count Königsmarck, ("their Conyngs mark thou"), who

had been very intimate with Lady Ogle up to her second marriage. Swift here charges her with being privy to Thynne's murder. The Duke of Somerset was her third husband.

The name which is the same either way is of course ANNA—*i.e.*, Queen Anne. That which is almost the same either way is MASHAM—*i.e.*, Mrs. Masham, formerly Abigail Hill. The whole purport of the advice contained in the prophecy is to the effect that Anne must keep Harley in office, expel the Duchess of Somerset from court, and take Mrs. Masham into her exclusive favour.

By the end of December the ministry had recovered from their panic. The bulk of the people were as strongly as ever on their side. Their suspicions of Anne's fidelity were found to be groundless. They resolved, therefore, to enter boldly upon a policy of punishment and proscription. The first victim was Marlborough. That eminent man's weakness for money had already placed in his enemies' hands a weapon of terrible efficacy. It had been discovered that during the last ten years Marlborough had been in the regular receipt of heavy bribes from Sir Solomon Medina, a Jewish contractor who supplied the army with bread. The duke's gains from this source alone amounted to £63,000. But this was nothing to a further sum of £177,000, consisting of a deduction of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the foreign subsidies paid by England, and transmitted to the duke, "for extraordinary and contingent expenses." Of these expenses no explanation was forthcoming; and it was declared that the money had been safely invested by the duke's own lawyers for the duke's own benefit.

These charges were definitely formulated on December 21, 1711. Ten days later the duke was dismissed

from all his appointments. Again there was an outcry from the Whigs at the removal, with war actually going on, of an able, patriotic, and trustworthy leader. At Whig suggestion, Prince Eugene, general of our Austrian allies, hurried over to England. He arrived on January 6, 1712, and in several interviews with the queen pointed out the iniquity and injustice of the Tory policy. This availed nothing. On the reassembling of parliament after the Christmas recess, the charges against Marlborough were fully gone into. The duke declared that the bread money had been used for the purpose of obtaining secret information of the enemy's designs. The percentage on foreign subsidies, he said, was a free gift from the princes to whom these subsidies were paid. His plea availed nothing—a decision, it should however be stated, due not so much to the weakness of his cause as to the animosity of his judges. The Duke of Ormond was appointed Marlborough's successor as commander-in-chief. The downfall of the latter, as might have been expected, was regarded as a tremendous triumph by the Tory party. All Grub Street was hired to hound him down; Swift himself joining in the cry with a broad-sheet entitled "The Fable of Midas." In this not very clever effusion he described the fate of Midas of old, with a side reference to Marlborough. Asking for the power of turning everything into gold, Midas found himself liable to starve as all he touched turned into the precious but unsustaining metal. Complaining of his lot, he is freed from it, but in punishment receives a pair of ass's ears. The poem concludes:—

“ While he his utmost strength applied,
To swim against this popular tide,
The golden spoils flew off apace ;
Here fell a pension, there a place ;

The torrent merciless imbibes
Commissions, perquisites, and bribes,
By their own weight sink to the bottom ;
Much good may't do them that have caught 'em ;
And Midas now neglected stands,
With ass's ears and dirty hands."^{*}

The Duke of Somerset after a short delay was then deprived of his post of master of the horse. His wife, contrary to Swift's advice, was allowed to retain her court offices. The Duke of Shrewsbury made his peace with the ministry and was gazetted to the lord lieutenancy of Ireland. To the smaller fry scant mercy was shown, and, as Swift put it, there was "a sweep of employments." Not content with this, the Government carried the war into the very heart of the enemy's stronghold. Robert Walpole, then a rising light of the Whig party, accused and condemned of malversation while secretary-at-war, was committed to the Tower. Protests were useless, for the Government had, on the last day of 1711, prevailed on the queen to create twelve Tory peers, by which all opposition in the Upper House was effectually crushed.

Negotiations with France were rapidly pushed on during the first five months of 1712. On June 6th, the proposed terms of peace were communicated to parliament and approved in both Houses by large majorities. On June 21st, parliament adjourned. On July 8th, St. John, who had long chafed at Harley's elevation, unwisely accepted a peerage under the title of Lord Bolingbroke, and was despatched to France to complete the final treaty.

Swift during the last few months had been less busy. In May, he wrote a little appeal to the Moderate Whigs entitled, "Some reasons to show that no one is obliged

^{*} Yet Swift writes in the *Journal*, January 8, 1712 : "Now he (Marlborough) is down, I shall not trample upon him ; although I love him not, I dislike his being out."

by his principles as a Whig to oppose the present Government." On July 19th appeared a burlesque "Letter from the Pretender to a Whig Lord"; in the latter production, the Pretender thanked Lord Wharton and his colleagues for their support, and promised them full reward on his restoration. On July 17th Swift writes to Stella: "PDFR" (*i.e.*, Swift himself) "has writ five or six Grub Street papers this last week. Have you seen 'Toland's Invitation to Dismal,' or 'Hue and Cry after Dismal,' or 'Ballad on Dunkirk,' or 'Agreement that Dunkirk is not in our hands'?" Most pamphlets of this time, however, though inspired by Swift, were the work of his coadjutors. The best known of these was a lady of adventurous antecedents and easy virtue named Catherine Manley, the earnest patronage of whom by Swift was much commented on by frivolous critics.¹

But the pamphlet warfare was losing its vitality. Early in 1712 the Government, alarmed at the vast quantity of libels against themselves, had imposed a halfpenny stamp duty on all newspapers. This was a terrible blow to the smaller pamphleteers.

"Grub Street has but ten days to live," writes Swift on

¹ Journal to Stella, July 3, 1711: "Lord Peterborough desired to see me this morning at nine. I met Mrs. Manley there, who was soliciting him to get some pension or reward for her service to the cause by writing her 'Atalantis,' and her prosecution upon it. I seconded her, and hope they will do something for the poor woman." The "Atalantis" is the most malignant pamphlet of the time. It accuses the chief Whig ladies of grave immorality, much space, for instance, being occupied by the description of an amour between the Duchess of Marlborough and Lord Godolphin. Among Mrs. Manley's other tracts are: "An Account of Guiscard's attempt on Harley"; "A Comment on Doctor Hare's Sermon (preached against the peace);" and an ironical "Vindication of the Duke of Marlborough." Mrs. Manley was at this time in bad health from dropsy, and is described as being "about forty, very homely, and very fat."

July 19th. A little later he moralises on its fall : "Do you know that Grub Street is dead and gone last week? No more ghosts or murders now for love or money. I plied it pretty close the last fortnight, and published at least seven penny papers of my own, besides some of other people's; but now every single half-sheet pays a halfpenny to the queen." It would seem, on the whole, that the new stamp duty was not much liked by Swift.

On November 15, 1712, Swift relates that while he was sitting with the lord treasurer there was brought into the room a mysterious band-box. Gentlemen in Queen Anne's days were not wont to have their articles of apparel sent home in such specially feminine enclosures; for which reason grave suspicion arose as to the contents of the band-box. Swift, opening it with much trepidation, discovered therein two ink-horns filled with gunpowder and bullets! He was astonished at his own bravery in exposing and warding off this infernal machine. "I wonder how I came to have so much presence of mind which is usually not my talent; but so it pleased God, and I saved myself and lord treasurer." Swift had an account of this horrid plot specially printed and published. But there was an irreverent spirit abroad, and a universal roar of laughter greeted this second attempt to murder the heaven-sent prime minister; some impudent persons going so far as to assert that Swift had packed and sent the band-box himself, so as to obtain the chance of figuring in attitude heroic.

Swift's intimacy with the ministers continued as close as ever. Knowledge of this fact caused him to be much pestered by office-hunters, to whom his fondness for the character of patron rendered him an easy prey. "I lodge up two pairs of stairs," he writes to Stella, "and have but one room, and deny myself to everybody almost,

yet I cannot be quiet ; and all my mornings are lost with people who will not take answers below stairs." On March 17, 1712, we read that Dr. Sacheverel "came this morning to give me thanks for getting his brother an employment. It was but six or seven weeks since I spoke to lord treasurer about him. *Sacheverel brought Trap along with him.*" Gratitude in this case was literally a sense of favours to come, for on July 17, 1712, Swift notes in the Journal, "I have made Trap chaplain to Lord Bolingbroke." Some of these applicants had singular requests, as, for instance, on February 8, 1712 : "This morning a scoundrel dog, one of the queen's music, a German, whom I had never seen, got access to me in my chamber by Patrick's" (Swift's servant) "folly, and gravely desired me to get an employment in the customs for a friend of his who would be very grateful, and likewise to forward a project of his own for raising ten thousand pounds a year upon operas. I used him civillier than he deserved, but it vexed me to the pluck. He was told I had a mighty interest with lord treasurer, and one word of mine, &c. &c." But besides these smaller men, members of the Government employed him to press their demands on the prime minister. January 8, 1713 : "The Duke of Ormond employed me to speak to lord treasurer to-day about an affair, and I did so, and the duke spoke himself two hours before, which vexed me, and I will chide the duke about it. I'll tell you a good thing: there is not one of the ministry but what will employ me as gravely to speak for them to lord treasurer as if I were their brother or his ; and I do it as gravely, though I know they do it only because they will not make themselves uneasy, or had rather I should be denied than they."

The congratulations Swift received on his services

were such as might have well satisfied a far prouder man. A few extracts from the "Journal to Stella" will show how vastly his position now differed from what it had been as Temple's secretary, or even Lord Berkeley's chaplain. It is curious to note the intense satisfaction with which he refers to any instance of deference paid him by the great.

February 4, 1712.—"The House of Commons have this day made many severe votes about our being abused by our allies. Those who spoke drew all their arguments from my book,¹ and their votes confirm all I writ; the court had a majority of 150; all agree that it was my book that spirited them to these resolutions."

December 21, 1712.—"This day se'nnight, after I had been talking at court with Sir William Wyndham, the Spanish ambassador came to him, and said he heard that was Doctor Swift, and desired him to tell me that his master, and the King of France, and the queen, were more obliged to me than any in Europe; so we bowed and shook hands, &c. I took it very well of him."

December 23rd.—"I dined with (lord treasurer), and Monteleon, the Spanish ambassador, who made me many compliments."

While the Tories praised Swift as their saviour, the Whigs joined together in cursing him as the chief author of their downfall. Marlborough, indeed, regarded him with special hatred, and a rumour was at one time prevalent that the duke had brought an action for libel against him in which the damages were laid at £20,000. The printer of "The Conduct of the Allies" was arrested and bound over by Chief Justice Parker. Swift, however, strong in Government support, escaped unscathed. Swift always deprecated the fury of the Whigs against him. As to

¹ "The Conduct of the Allies."

Marlborough, he declared that he had often struck out violent passages from pamphlets written against that great man by Tory understrappers. If so, it is a pity no specimens of these expurgations have been preserved. As to his old Whig friends, Swift again and again complains that he had done his best for them: "Steele I have kept in his place; Congreve I have got to be used kindly, and secured; Rowe I have recommended, and got a promise of a place; Philips I should certainly have provided for, if he had not run party mad, and made me withdraw my recommendations; and I set Addison so right at first, that he might have been employed, and have partly secured him the place he has."¹

But the Whig writers would have been more than mortal if they had not shown some jealousy at their quondam ally's super-eminent success under Tory colours.

While Swift continued thus to drink the cup of flattery and congratulation, there was one thought which ever and anon rose up before him like a cloud: What and when was to be his reward? He had spurned Harley's pecuniary favours as an insult. High preferment alone he considered to be his due. But as time went on, though the ministerial courtesy never relaxed, no effort was made to obtain for Swift the expected recompense. He refers frequently to the subject in his Journal. As early as February 9, 1711, he remarks: "Mr. Harley, of late has said nothing of presenting me to the queen. . . . He has such a weight of affairs on him that he cannot mind all." A week later: "They (the ministers) call me nothing but Jonathan; and I said I believed they would leave me Jonathan as they found me, and that I never knew a ministry do anything for those whom they make companions of their pleasures; and I

¹ Journal, December 27, 1712.

believe you will find it so; but I care not." On April 2nd he seems to have become rather doubtful: "The assurances they (the ministers) gave me without scruple or provocation, are such as are usually believed in the world; they may come to nothing, but the first opportunity that offers and is neglected, I shall depend no more, but come away."

May 23rd he writes: "O faith! I should be glad to be in the same kingdom with MD (Stella). . . . But I am kept here by a most capricious fate, which I would break through if I could do it with decency or honour. To return without some mark of distinction would look extremely little; and I would likewise gladly be somewhat richer than I am."

For the next ten months Swift is so busy with the political struggle that he has no time to think of himself.

He has found places for seven people since he came to England, but can do nothing for himself. "I don't care," he adds; "I shall have ministries and other people obliged to me."

But by the end of 1712, he begins to write in a really complaining tone. December 26th: "I dined with lord treasurer, who chid me for being absent three days. Mighty kind; less of civility and more of interest!"

February 25, 1713.—"Lord treasurer met me last night at Lord Masham's, and thanked me for my company in a jeer, because I had not dined with him in three days. He chides me if I stay away but two days together. What will this come to? Nothing. My grandmother used to say, 'More of your lining, and less of your dining.'"

Of Lord Oxford's remissness in exerting himself for one to whom he owed so much it is easy to find an explanation. As a matter of fact, place-hunters always exaggerate the perverseness of their patrons. Bishops and deans do

not die every day, and, with the best intentions in the world, it was by no means easy to find a vacancy which would satisfy Swift's demands. Lord Oxford was the laziest of men, and perpetual solicitation by hungry clients, lay and clerical, had rendered the practice of unmeaning compliment a second nature to him. But beyond all this was another and stronger obstacle to Swift's claims. This was the queen herself, who insisted on a voice in all high ecclesiastical appointments.

Poor Louis XVI. is said to have feebly objected to making Loménie de Brienne Archbishop of Toulouse, on the ground that the would-be prelate did not believe in God. In the same way Anne had set her face firmly against granting promotion to the author of the "Tale of a Tub."¹ To what extent the ministry pressed Swift's claims there is no means of knowing. Certain it is that on April 13, 1713, Mr. Lewis (Lord Oxford's secretary), in answer probably to some severe inquiries, showed Swift an order for a warrant for three deaneries, none of which were for him. "This was what I always foresaw," says Swift, "and I received the notice of it better, I believe, than I expected. I bid Mr. Lewis tell my lord treasurer that I take nothing ill of him but his not giving me timely notice, as he promised to do, if he found the queen would do nothing for me. At noon lord treasurer, hearing I was in Mr. Lewis's office, came to me, and said many things too long to repeat. I told him I had nothing to do but go to Ireland immediately; for I could not, with any reputation, stay longer here, unless I had something honourable immediately given me." This dignified remonstrance had some effect on Harley. Swift's claims were energetically pressed on the queen by Harley, Lady Masham and

¹ It was the Archbishop of York, Dr. Sharp, who informed Anne that Swift was responsible for this work.

the Duke of Ormond. The original warrants for the deaneries were stopped; and at length, on April 23rd, Swift received the news that her Majesty had been pleased to appoint him dean of the cathedral church of St. Patrick's, Dublin. He had hoped for the deanery of Windsor. But there was no help for it. With a parting murmur at the prospect "of having to spend my days in Ireland," and a parting regret that the ministry let him go from them so easily, he accepted the offer. His friends congratulated him; but he was not happy, and the whole tone of his journals at this time shows that he was bitterly disgusted at the ministerial ingratitude.

The final treaty of peace between France and England was signed at Utrecht on March 31, 1713. The party struggle, however, though not so definite, still continued as virulent as ever. Before Swift could set out for Ireland he found himself involved in a furious quarrel with his old friend Steele.

An article had recently appeared in the Tory *Examiner*, in which not only was Lord Nottingham attacked, but his daughter also was made the subject of a disgraceful libel. Steele promptly issued a protest against so dishonourable an action in his paper, *The Guardian*, on April 28th. The protest was answered; and on May 12th, Steele published a rejoinder written in strong terms and, though no names were mentioned, pointing at Swift himself as the author of the libel in question. The charge against Swift was baseless. But much may be said in Steele's excuse. Swift had, it is true, ceased to write in *The Examiner* since June, 1711. But his name was specially identified with it; and its present conductors were universally regarded as writing under his inspiration. Libels on women, moreover, were a form of attack which Swift specially affected; ¹

¹ The reader will find an instance of this in the "Character of Lord V. harton."

and he had done nothing to discourage the use of this most odious of political weapons among his associates. On reading Steele's insinuations against him, Swift at once sent a disclaimer to Addison. He declared he was a stranger to the present editor of *The Examiner*. "Should not Mr. Steele" he added, "have first expostulated with me as a friend? Have I deserved this usage from Mr. Steele, who knows very well that my lord treasurer has kept him in his employment upon my entreaty and intercession?" Addison handed the letter to Steele. The latter refused to believe the disclaimer, and in writing to Swift he laughed at the latter's plea that he had spoken in his behalf to the Government. In conclusion, he sneeringly congratulated him on being made dean of St. Patrick's. It was impossible for Swift to rest under this imputation. He wrote a long epistle to Steele himself, again vindicating himself from the charge brought against him and reproving Steele for the reckless way in which he had endeavoured to take away the character of "a Christian and a clergyman." On June 1st Swift left London. He sailed from Holyhead on June 8th, and reached Dublin in two days.

The following chapter will describe Swift's social life during this, his most important, visit to England.

CHAPTER V.

IN THE GREAT WORLD.

High position of literary men under Anne—Greatness of Swift—A chartered libertine—Kennet's portrait of him—Discussion of his conduct—Swift's economy—His habit of dining out—Extracts from the "Journal to Stella" illustrating Swift's manner of life—His stay at Chelsea—A favourite with the ladies—Visits to Buckleberry and Parson's Green—Episodes in his social career—Addison's "Cato"—Patrick and his sins—Literature—The court—Incidents of the time—A madman—Guiscard's corpse—Gossip about Swift's friends—The Duchess of Marlborough's avarice—The story of little Harrison—The Mohocks—Duelling—Sir Cholmley Dering and Mr. Thornhill—The Duke of Hamilton and Lord Mohun—Swift's interest in the latter affair—Relations between Swift and Stella—Importance of the Journal—The "little language"—The Vanhomrighs—Swift's acquaintance with Vanessa—His singular conduct—Prospect of future trouble.

NEVER have men of letters been held in so high an estimation as in the reign of Anne. Both political parties strove to the utmost to secure their services; and their rewards were such as might have satisfied the most ambitious aspirants. Addison, in return for his poem in praise of the victory of Blenheim, was made a commissioner of appeals, under-secretary of state, and secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Steele, another Whig henchman, from a trooper in the Guards became commissioner of the stamp office, and enjoyed later on three other lucrative offices. Matthew Prior, an

innkeeper's nephew, whose verses pleased the cultured taste of a great minister, rose to the high post of English ambassador to France. Nor was the social position of the man of letters at this time inferior to his political importance. Between Addison and the haughty Whig leaders the closest familiarity existed. Bolingbroke and Prior in their private letters style one another by their Christian names. As might have been expected, no writer availed himself of his opportunity so eagerly as Swift. "All my endeavours to distinguish myself," he has said, "were only for want of a great title and fortune, that I might be used like a lord by those who have an opinion of my parts." The moment he had been waiting for ever since the gloomy days at Moor Park had come at last, and he enjoyed his unaccustomed honours to the full. From the November of 1710 to the May of 1713 he was the chartered libertine of English society. Partly from respect for his abilities, partly from the actual value of his assistance, partly from amusement at the novelty of the thing, the great world surrendered itself as to a conqueror. He never flattered. When told that the Duke of Buckingham desires his acquaintance, he answers that the duke has not made sufficient advances to him yet. When asked to a dinner party by a secretary of state, he insists on drawing up a list of the company. Even ladies have to bow beneath the yoke. However beautiful, wealthy, or high-born, they must always appear as suppliants for Dr. Swift's acquaintance. Even then his rule is far from easy. "Lady Burlington," says he, "I hear you can sing; sing me a song." Her ladyship resents such an unceremonious address, and refuses. "Why, madam," says Swift, "I suppose you take me for one of your poor English hedge-parsons; sing, when I bid you." As Lord Burlington only laughs, the lady bursts

into tears and leaves the room. This does not soften Swift. He meets her a few days after. "Pray, madam, are you so proud and ill-natured now as when I last saw you?" is his greeting. The man's fascination is so strong that all yield to him. Not a night passes but he spends it as the centre of some aristocratic assembly. He positively revels in the novel splendour of his position. "I thought I saw Jack Temple and his wife pass by me to-day in their coach," he says to Stella. "I took no notice of them. I am glad I have wholly shaken off that family." He walks straight up to the prime minister's private room on a busy day, and jeers at the crowd of less favoured clients who have been waiting long hours in the ante-chamber. One can easily picture to oneself Swift's appearance at this time. Like all Anglican clergymen he wears a cassock and gown with wide puffed "pudding" sleeves, his head being surmounted by an enormous periwig. He is of middle height, with a robust and upright figure. His marked features, clear brow, and keen blue eyes impress those who meet him with a mingled sense of vivacity and power. His voice is strong, his language incisive, his manner dictatorial. The influence of his conversational powers is extraordinary. A master of irony, and an adept in the art of playing upon words, on serious subjects he can reach to the very heart of his auditor, while in giving odd turns of interest to commonplace matters he is without an equal.

The best picture of him at the height of his power is that given by Bishop Kennet in his diary, 1713:—

"Dr. Swift came into the coffee-house and had a bow from everybody but me. When I came to the ante-chamber to wait before prayers, Dr. Swift was the principal man of talk and business, and acted as master of requests. He was soliciting the Earl of Arran to speak

to his brother, the Duke of Ormond, to get a chaplain's place established in the garrison of Hull for Mr. Fiddes, a clergyman in that neighbourhood, who had lately been in gaol, and published sermons to pay fees. He was promising Mr. Thorold to undertake with my lord treasurer that, according to his petition, he should obtain a salary of £200 per annum, as minister of the English church at Rotterdam. He stopped F. Gwynne, Esq., going in with the red bag to the queen, and told him aloud he had something to say to him from my lord treasurer. He talked with the son of Dr. Davenant to be sent abroad, and took out his pocket-book, and wrote down several things, as *memoranda* to do for him. He turned to the fire and took out his gold watch, and then, telling the time of the day, complained it was very late. A gentleman said 'he was too fast.' 'How can I help it,' says the doctor (Swift) 'if the courtiers give me a watch that won't go right?' Then he instructed a young nobleman that the best poet in England was Mr. Pope (a papist), who had begun a translation of Homer into English verse, for which 'he must have them all subscribe; for,' says he, 'the author shall not begin to print till I have a thousand guineas for him.' Lord treasurer, after leaving the queen, came through the room beckoning Dr. Swift to follow him. Both went off just before prayers."

In all this one sees an intense pride exulting at its deliverance from long years of enforced self-restraint.

Monck Mason, in his "Life of Swift,"² makes the following comment:—"That quality of Swift which most redounds to his immortal honour is his zeal in asserting the superiority of talents and virtue over titles and wealth; he was the first person of genius and letters who went

² To be found in Mason's "History and Antiquities of the Church of St. Patrick, Dublin."

beyond vain speculation in this respect, boldly demanding and actually receiving the homage due to that which constitutes the true superiority of man." For this statement there is little to be said. The leading men of the social and political world had already learnt to pay due respect to genius before Swift's appearance on the scene. One never hears that Addison, Steele, or Pope, had to complain of rudeness or oversights. Swift's roughness in the presence of the great is frequently so pointed as to betray a needless suspicion of inferiority. It is like that of the mulatto who, in white society, is constantly calling attention to his woolly hair and peculiar finger-nails; and it can hardly be supposed that Harley, St. John, or Ormond would have treated Swift with less respect had his bearing been simple, easy, and unembarrassed—in a word, that of a gentleman among gentlemen.

Swift's available income during his stay in London was under two hundred pounds a year. To maintain an appearance in the great world he was therefore compelled to exercise most stringent economy. But apart from the, at that time, necessary cost of a man-servant, he had few expenses. His lodgings were very cheap. In Bury Street he had a dining-room and bed-chamber on the first floor at eight shillings a week. At Chelsea he was content "with one silly room with confounded coarse sheets," for which he paid six shillings a week. He bitterly bewails any incidental expense.

January 15, 1711.—"It has cost me three guineas to-day for a periwig. I am undone! It was made by a Leicester man, who married Mr. Worrell's daughter, where my mother lodged; so I thought it would be cheap, and especially since he lives in the city." ¹ Swift was a

¹ Yet the price of a full-bottomed periwig was often thirty or forty guineas.

good walker, and thus rarely incurred the trouble of a coach or sedan chair. It was, however, necessary in rainy weather, which he denounces as ruinous to his "pate and purse."

September 8, 1711.—"It is terrible rainy weather and has cost me three shillings in coaches and chairs." He seems to have kept fairly clear of card-playing.

October 2, 1711.—"I have been very idle this afternoon, playing at twelpenny picquet with Lewis; I won seven shillings, which is the only money I won this year. I have not played above four times."

Swift's greatest economical achievement was in the matter of dinner. The occasions on which he dined at his own expense during this three years' visit to London might be almost counted on the fingers. Night after night he dined with Harley or St. John. Other friends, such as Harcourt, Masham, and Ormond, were always glad to receive him, and he soon began to look on dinner at a friend's house every night as a matter of course. Some of his references to the subject are rather amusing. The usual dinner hour, it should be remembered, was three in the afternoon. Fashionable people dined at four; reprobates as late as six.

December 18, 1710.—"I was hunting to dine with Mr. Harley to-day, but could not find him; and so I dined with honest Dr. Cockburn and came home at six."

December 20, 1710.—"I went to the court of requests, thinking to find Mr. Harley and dine with him, and refuse Henley and everybody, and at last knew not where to go, and met Jemmy Leigh by chance, so I dined at his lodgings on a beef-steak."

August 26, 1711.—"People have so left the town that I am at a loss for a dinner. It is a long time since I have been at London upon a Sunday, and the ministers are all at Windsor. It cost me eighteenpence in coach-hire

before I could find a place to dine in. I went to Frankland's and he was abroad ; and the drab, his wife, looked out of window, and bowed to me without inviting me up ; so I dined with Mr. Coote, my Lord Monrath's brother."

September 14, 1711.—"I was mortified enough to-day, not knowing where in the world to dine, the town is so empty. I met H. Coote, and thought he would invite me, but he did not. Sir John Stanley did not come into my head, so I took up with Mrs. Van (Vanhomrigh), and dined with her and her landlady." But there was something besides dinner to be met at "Mrs. Van's."

Swift was not a *gourmand*. "I hardly ever eat of above one thing," he tells Stella, "and that the plainest ordinary meat at table ; I love it best, and believe it wholesomest." However, except with very great personages, dinner in these simple days did not usually consist of more than two courses. So Swift was not often called on to exercise restraint. As regards favourite dishes, he seems to have had a fancy for venison ; and he is specially enthusiastic over a haunch he partook of at Lord Abercorn's "which smelt rarely on one side." Occasionally he dined at a tavern with a friend. Of these places Pontack's was the best known. "I dined in the city at Pontack's with Stratford," says Swift, adding rather ruefully, "It cost me seven shillings." This, however, was nothing to a trick played on him once by St. John.

September 15, 1711, he records that being on an excursion with Mr. St. John : "I made the secretary stop at Brentford, because we set out at two this afternoon, and fasting would not agree with me. I only designed to eat a bit of bread and butter, but he would light, and we ate roast beef like dragons. And he made me treat him and two more gentlemen ; faith, it cost me a guinea. I don't like such jesting."

The following extracts from the "Journal to Stella" will illustrate Swift's usual manner of life at this time :

London, April 10, 1711.—". . . Went to take leave of poor Mrs. St. John, who gave me strict charge to take care of the secretary in her absence ; said she had none to trust but me : and the poor creature's tears came fresh into her eyes. Before we took leave I was drawn in to raffle for a fan ; it was four guineas, and we put in seven shillings apiece. Several raffled for absent people, but I lost, and so missed an opportunity of showing my gallantry to Mrs. St. John, whom I designed to have presented it to if I had won. . . . I carried Ford to dine with Mr. St. John last Sunday, that he may brag, when he goes back, of dining with a secretary of state. The secretary and I went away early, and left him drinking with the rest, and he told me 'that two or three of them were drunk.'

The latter must have indeed been the case, as the following entry in the Journal shows :

London, April 12, 1711.—"I went about noon to the secretary, who is very ill with a cold, and sometimes of the gravel, with his champagne, &c. I scolded him like a dog, and he promises faithfully more care for the future."

Swift always chronicles his own jokes with great glee.

London, April 23, 1711.—"I made a good pun on Saturday to my lord keeper (Lord Harcourt). After dinner we had coarse Doiley napkins, fringed at each end, upon the table to drink with. My lord keeper spread one of them between him and Mr. Prior. I told him I was glad to see there was such a fringeship (friendship) between Mr. Prior and his lordship. Prior swore 'it was the worst he had ever heard.' I said 'I thought so too,'

but at the same time I thought it was most like one of Stella's that ever I heard. I dined to-day with Lord Mountjoy, and this evening saw the Venetian ambassador coming from his first public audience. His coach was the most monstrous, huge, fine, rich, gilt thing that ever I saw. I loitered this evening, and came home late."

During the summer of 1711, he took lodgings at Chelsea for the benefit of the fresher air. He liked an occasional bathe in the river; and the walk into town did him good.

Chelsea, May 15, 1711.—"My walk to town to-day was after ten, and prodigiously hot. I dined with Lord Shelburne, and have desired Mrs. Pratt, who lodges there, to carry over Mrs. Walls' tea; I hope she will do it; and they talk of going in a fortnight. My way is this: I leave my best gown and periwig at Mrs. Van-homrigh's, then walk up the Pall Mall, through the park, out at Buckingham House, and so to Chelsea a little beyond the church. I set out about sunset, and get there in something less than an hour; it is two good miles, and just five thousand seven hundred and forty-eight steps; so there is four miles a day walking, without reckoning what I walk while I stay in town. When I pass the Mall in the evening it is prodigious to see the number of ladies walking there; and I always cry shame at the ladies of Ireland, who never walk at all, as if their legs were of no use but to be laid aside. I have been now almost three weeks here, and, I thank God, am much better in my head, if it does but continue."

Chelsea, May 19, 1711.—"Do you know that about our town we are mowing already and making hay, and it smells so sweet as we walk through the flowery meads? but the haymaking nymphs are perfect drabs, nothing so clean and pretty as farther in the country. There is a

mighty increase of dirty wenches in straw hats since I knew London."

With ladies, always more favourably disposed to a tyrant than a slave, Swift was very popular. Besides Mrs. St. John, the Duchess of Ormond, and Lady Masham, he struck up a close acquaintance with the Countess of Orkney, formerly mistress to King William III., but now married to a brother of the Duke of Hamilton. He was constantly at her house, and many letters passed between the two. The countess made Swift several little presents, such as an embroidered dressing-gown and a writing-table. "Lady Orkney," he adds in his Journal for February 8, 1713, "has given me her picture, a very fine original of Sir Godfrey Kneller's; it is now a-mending. He has favoured her squint admirably; and you know I love a cast in the eye."

Another of Swift's admirers was Mrs. Anne Long. She was a great beauty, and much liked in society. He had met her first at Mrs. Vanhomrigh's in 1709. On the ground that she was already a celebrated toast, she rashly claimed exemption from the rule that all ladies desirous of Dr. Swift's acquaintance were to make the first advances. But on the case being submitted to arbitration, judgment was given against her. It was declared that the supremacy of Dr. Swift overrode all law, all custom and all privileges.

However, the court concluded, "in consideration of the said Mrs. Long being a toast, we think it just and reasonable that the said Doctor Swift should permit her to give herself the reputation of being one of his acquaintances, which no other lady shall presume to do, upon any pretence whatsoever, without his especial leave and license first had and obtained." Poor Mrs. Long subsequently got heavily into debt, and to escape arrest retired under

the assumed name of Mrs. Smith to Lynn, in Norfolk, where she died in December, 1711. Swift has some feeling remarks on her in his Journal: "The poor creature had retired to Lynn two years ago to live cheap and pay her debts. In her last letter she told me she hoped to be easy by Christmas; and she kept her word, although she meant it otherwise. She had all sorts of amiable qualities and no ill ones, but the indiscretion of neglecting her own affairs. . . . I believe melancholy helped her on to her grave." In a private memorandum book of his own he adds: "She was the most beautiful person of the age she lived in, of great honour and virtue, infinite sweetness and generosity of temper, and true good sense."

The following extract shows Swift in his lighter mood:—

Chelsea, June 6, 1711. "Lady Berkeley after dinner clapped my hat on another lady's head, and she in roguery put it upon the rails. I minded them not, but in two minutes they called me to the window, and Lady Carteret showed me my hat out of her window five doors off, where I was forced to walk to it, and pay her and old Lady Weymouth a visit, with some more beldames. Then I went and drank coffee, and made one or two puns with Lord Pembroke, and designed to go to lord treasurer; but it was too late, and besides, I was half broiled, and broiled without butter, for I never sweat after dinner if I drink any wine. Then I sat an hour with Lady Betty Butler at tea, and everything made me hotter and drier. Then I walked home, and was here by ten."

Then there is mention of a visit to Mr. St. John's country house.

August 4 and 5, 1711.—"I dined yesterday at Buckleberry,¹ where we lay two nights, and set out this morning

¹ Usually written *Bucklersbury*.

at eight, and were here by twelve; in four hours we went twenty-six miles. Mr. Secretary was a perfect country gentleman at Buckleberry; he smoked tobacco with one or two neighbours; he inquired after the wheat in such a field; he went to visit his hounds, and knew all their names; he and his lady saw me to my chamber just in the country fashion. His house is in the midst of near three thousand pounds a year he had by his lady, who is descended from Jack of Newbury, of whom books and ballads are written; and there is an old picture of him in the house. She is a great favourite of mine.”¹

Occasionally we get an allusion to Swift's curious inability to eat fruit, early over-indulgence in which he thought was the cause of his bad health.

Windsor, September 1, 1711.—“The secretary and I, and Brigadier Sutton, dined to-day at Parson's Green, at my Lord Peterborow's² house, who has left it and his gardens to the secretary during his absence. It is the

¹ Mrs. St. John was a Frances Winchescombe, a daughter and co-heiress of Sir Francis Winchescombe. Her estate was near Reading. She was a woman of great beauty, but her marriage was a family arrangement, and her husband never loved her.

² Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough (1658(?)–1735), a great friend of Swift, though not often in London. He was the most versatile man of the age, and earned equal distinction as a soldier, a diplomatist, and a lover. His eccentric energy is described by Swift in one of the best of his minor poems:—

“In journeys he outrides the post,
Sits up till midnight with his host,
Talks politics, and gives the toast.

Knows every prince in Europe's face,
Flies like a squib from place to place,
And travels not, but runs a race.

A skeleton in outward figure,
His meagre corpse, though full of vigour,
Would halt behind him were it bigger.”

finest garden I have ever seen about this town, and abundance of hot walls for grapes, where they are in great plenty, and ripening fast. I durst not eat any fruit but one fig; but I brought a basketful to my friend Lewis here at Windsor. Does Stella never eat any? What! no apricots at Donnybrook? nothing but claret and ombre?¹ I envy people maunching and maunching peaches and grapes, and I not daring to eat a bit. My head is pretty well, only a sudden turn any time makes me giddy for a moment, and sometimes it feels very stuffed; but if it grows no worse, I can bear it very well. I take all opportunities of walking; and we have a delicious park here just joining to the castle, and an avenue in the great part very wide and two miles long, set with a double row of elms on each side. Were you ever at Windsor? I was once a great while ago, but had quite forgotten it."

The next few extracts relate to dinners, visits, and general episodes:

September 7, 1711.—"I dined with my friend Lewis at his lodgings, and walked at six to Kensington to Mrs. Masham's christening. It was very private; nobody there but my lord treasurer, his son, and son-in-law—that is to say, Lord Harley, Lord Dupplin, Lord Rivers and I. The Dean of Rochester christened the child, but soon went away. Lord treasurer and Lord Rivers were godfathers, and Mrs. Hill, Mrs. Masham's sister, godmother. The child roared like a bull, and I gave Mrs. Masham joy of it. Mrs. Masham sat up dressed in bed, but not as they do in Ireland, with all smooth about her, as if she was cut off in the middle, for you might see the counterpane (what d'ye call it?) rise above her hips and body."

¹ A game at cards.

January 15, 1712.—“I was very deep with the Duke of Ormond to-day at the Cock Pit,¹ where we met to be private. . . . My friend Penn came there—Will Penn the Quaker—at the head of his brethren, to thank the duke for his kindness to their people in Ireland. To see a dozen scoundrels with their hats on, and the duke complimenting them with his off, was a good sight enough. I sat this evening with Sir William Robinson, who has mighty often invited me to a bottle of wine ; and it is past twelve o'clock.”

February 6, 1712.—“I went to dine at Lord Masham’s at three, and met all the company just coming out of court—a mighty crowd. They stayed long for their coaches. I had an opportunity of seeing several lords and ladies of my acquaintance in their fineries. Lady Ashburnham looked the best in my eyes. They say the court was never fuller nor finer. Lord treasurer, his lady, and two daughters, and Mrs. Hill dined at Lord and Lady Masham’s ; the five ladies were monstrous fine. The queen gave Prince Eugene the diamond sword to-day, but nobody was by when she gave it except my lord chamberlain. There was an entertainment of opera songs at night, and the queen was at all the entertainment, and is very well after it. I saw Lady Wharton, as ugly as the devil, coming out in the crowd all in an undress ; she has been with the Marlborough daughters and Lady Bridgewater in St. James’s, looking out of the window all undressed to see the sight. I do not hear that one Whig lady was there, except those of the bed-chamber. Nothing has made so great a noise as one Kelson’s chariot, that cost nine hundred and thirty pounds, the finest was ever seen. The rabble huzzaed him as much as they did Prince Eugene.”

¹ Name given to one of the council-chambers at Whitehall.

February 26, 1712.—“To-day in the morning I visited upward. First I saw the Duke of Ormond below stairs, and gave him joy of his being declared general in Flanders; then I went up one pair of stairs, and sate with the duchess; then I went up another pair of stairs, and paid a visit to Lady Betty; and desired her woman to go up to the garret, that I might pass half an hour with her, but she was young and handsome and would not!”

February 18, 1713.—“The Earl of Abingdon has been teasing me these three months to dine with him; and this day was appointed about a week ago, and I named my company: Lord Stawell, Colonel Disney, and Dr. Arbuthnot; but the two last slipped out their necks and left Stawell and me to dine there. We did not dine till seven, because it is Ash Wednesday. We had nothing but fish, which Lord Stawell could not eat, and got a broiled leg of a turkey. Our wine was poison; yet the puppy has twelve thousand pounds a year. His carps were raw and his candles tallow. He shall not catch me in haste again, and everybody has laughed at me for dining with him.”

Swift attended auctions, and was frequently tempted to lay out money on books and pictures.

March 6, 1713.—“I was to-day at an auction of pictures with Pratt, and laid out two pounds five shillings for a picture of Titian, and if it were a Titian it would be worth twice as many pounds. If I am cheated, I'll part with it to Lord Masham; if it be a bargain, I'll keep it to myself.”

March 10th.—“I went to look on a library I am going to buy, if we can agree. I have offered a hundred and twenty pounds, and will give ten pounds more. Lord Bolingbroke will lend me the money. I was two hours poring over the books. I will sell some of them

and keep the rest; but I doubt they won't take the money."

He took little interest in the theatre. The following shows that his connection with Addison was not quite broken :

April 6, 1713.—"I was this morning at ten at the rehearsal of Mr. Addison's play, called "Cato," which is to be acted on Friday. There was not above half a score of us to see it. We stood on the stage, and it was foolish enough to see the actors prompted every moment, and the poet directing them; and the drab that acts Cato's daughter (Mrs. Oldfield) out in the midst of a passionate part, and then calling out 'What's next?' The Bishop of Clogher was there too, but he stood privately in a gallery."

Much of the Journal is devoted to the misdeeds of Swift's servant, Patrick. The fascinations of London proved too strong for that jovial Irishman. He entered with great zest into the pleasures of his brother footmen, who at that time formed quite a distinct class in the community. They were usually put on board wages, which left them largely at liberty. They claimed a right of free admittance to the upper gallery at the theatres whenever they accompanied their masters thither. Those in the service of peers or members of parliament used to hold mock debates outside the Palace of Westminster whilst waiting for their masters. "Bromley is chosen speaker," Swift writes to Stella, "and Pompey, Colonel Hill's black, designs to stand speaker for the footmen. I am engaged to use my interest for him, and have spoken to Patrick to get him some votes." Patrick soon began to grow fond of convivial meetings, which were apt to end up in a free fight.¹ Patrick "has been drunk ten times

¹ The sedan-chairmen at this time and for long after were always

within three weeks," writes Swift as early as October 10, 1710. He tears his clothes, breaks furniture by his awkwardness—for which Swift has to pay—and disobeys Swift's orders in the most scandalous manner. On July 28, 1711 Mr. St. John had engaged to call for Swift at his lodgings in Bury Street at two and take him to Windsor. Patrick is told to have everything packed up and be at home half an hour earlier. "Do you think that abominable dog Patrick," writes Swift, "was out after two to-day, and I in a fright every moment for fear the chariot should come; and when he came in, he had not put up one of my things!"

After the arrival at Windsor Patrick gets worse than ever. Swift writes on August 2, 1711:—"I have been now five days at Windsor, and Patrick has been drunk three times that I have seen, and oftener than I believe. He has lately had clothes that have cost me five pounds, and the dog thinks he has the whip-hand of me; he begins to master me; so now I am resolved to part with him, and will use him without the least pity." When sober, Patrick was a good servant. He told lies "nearly as well as Mr. Harley's porter," and was an excellent hand at keeping away unpleasant visitors. He had a tender heart also, and devoted sixpence—a most extravagant sum his master told him—to the purchase of a tame linnet, of which he was very fond. Swift therefore hesitated long about discharging him. But the case was hopeless. On October 1, 1711 Dr. Swift, after spending the evening with Lady Oglethorpe, comes home to find that Patrick has locked up his lodgings and gone off with the key. He had to wait for two hours. "Then came in Irish. Whenever one of their number died, his brethren used to subscribe among themselves so as to have a "wake." Patrick attended one of these ceremonies.

Patrick. I went up, shut the chamber door, and gave him two or three swinge-ing¹ cuffs on the ear, and I have sprained the thumb of my left hand with pulling him, which I did not feel until he was gone. He was plaguily afraid and humbled."

December 24, 1711, Swift writes:—"I gave Patrick half-a-crown, on condition that he would be good, and he came home drunk at midnight. I have taken a memorandum of it, because I never design to give him a groat more." Swift gave his servant one more chance. But it was no use, and in 1712 Patrick was discarded. Yet Swift regretfully adds that "my new man is not such an artist as Patrick at denying me."

In the midst of his political struggles Swift by no means neglected the higher interests of general literature. He had a great idea of combining the writers of his time in a compact body and of making the link of patronage between them and the powers of the state as close as possible. In June, 1711,² a club, composed partly of men of wit, partly of men of interest, was formed. Consisting first of twelve it was subsequently increased to nineteen members. Its members included men like the Duke of Ormond, Lord Lansdowne, and St. John on one side, and Swift himself, Arbuthnot, and Freind on the other. They styled themselves "Brothers" and dined together every Thursday evening. Literary subjects were always discussed and the merits of the latest work by any member of the club criticised and canvassed. Not content with this, Swift, who always admired the French theory of strict literary rules, in February, 1712, addressed to the lord treasurer an elaborate proposal for "correcting, improving, and ascertaining the English language."

¹ *Swinge*, to beat; the word is now obsolete.

² See Journal for June 21, 1711

Swift's object was, by creating certain definite standards, to prevent such alteration as might render the works of the good writers of one age unintelligible to those of a later. The proposal, which would have involved the creation of an English Academy of Letters, came to nothing. Dr. Johnson's comment upon it is characteristic :

"The certainty and stability which, contrary to all experience, Swift thinks attainable, he proposes to secure by instituting an academy, the decrees of which every man would have been willing, and many would have been proud, to disobey, and which, being renewed by successive elections, would in a short time have differed from itself."

As to the justice of this criticism the reader may form his own opinion. An authoritative standard of vocabulary and style would be an inestimable blessing to English literature. Whether it would be possible to make writers obey that standard is another question. Besides the above, Swift, who much aspired after the fame of a historian, spent much of his leisure on a "History of the last four years of Queen Anne's reign," a dull work which only saw the light in 1758.

We get several pictures of life at court, which Swift treated as "his coffee-house."

August 8, 1711.—"There was a drawing-room to-day at court but so few company, that the queen sent for us into her bed-chamber, where we made our bows, and stood about twenty of us round the room, while she looked at us round with her fan in her mouth, and once a minute said about three words to some that were nearest her; and then she was told dinner was ready and went out. I dined at the green cloth, by Mr. Scarborough's invitation, who is in waiting. It is much the best table in England, and costs the queen a

thousand pounds a month while she is at Windsor or Hampton Court, and is the only mark of magnificence or hospitality I can see in the queen's family; it is designed to entertain foreign ministers, and people of quality, who come to see the queen and have no place to dine at."

July 31, 1711.—"The queen was abroad to-day in order to hunt, but finding it disposed to rain, she kept in her coach. She hunts in a chaise with one horse, which she drives herself, and drives furiously like Jehu, and is a mighty hunter like Nimrod."

September 2, 1711.—" . . . We had a great court, and among others I saw your Ingoldsby, who, seeing me talking familiarly with the keeper, treasurer, &c., came up and saluted me, and began a very impertinent discourse about the siege of Bouchain. I told him I could not answer his questions, but I would bring him one that should; so I went and fetched Sutton (who brought over the express about a month ago) and delivered him to the general, and bid him answer his questions; and so I left them together. Sutton, after some time, came back in rage; finds me with Lord Rivers and Masham, and there complains of the trick I had played him, and swore he had been plagued to death with Ingoldsby's talk. . . . So we laughed."

September 19, 1711.—"Arbuthnot made me draw up a sham subscription for a book, called a History of the Maids of Honour since, &c., to pay a crown in hand, and the other crown upon the delivery of the book, and all in the common form of those things. We got a gentleman to write it fair, because my hand is well known, and we sent it to the maids of honour when they came to supper. If they bite at it, it will be a very good court jest, and the queen will certainly have it; we did not tell Mrs. Hill.

September 21, 1711.—“The maids of honour are bit,¹ and have all contributed their crowns, and are teasing others to subscribe for the book.”

October 4, 1711 (Windsor).—“It was the finest day in the world, and we got out before eleven, a noble caravan of us. The Duchess of Shrewsbury in her own chaise with one horse, and Miss Touchet with her; Mrs. Masham and Mrs. Scarborough, one of the dressers, in one of the queen’s chaises; Miss Forrester and Miss Scarborough, two maids of honour, and Mrs. Hill on horseback. The Duke of Shrewsbury, Mr. Masham, George Fielding, Arbuthnot (the court-physician), and I, on horseback too. Mrs. Hill’s horse was hired for Miss Scarborough, but she took it in civility; her own horse was galled and could not be rid, but kicked and winced; the hired horse was not worth eighteenpence. I borrowed coat, boots, and horse. . . . My coat was light camlet, faced with red velvet and silver buttons. We rode in the great park about a dozen miles, and the duchess and I had much conversation; we got home by two, and Mr. Masham, his lady, Arbuthnot, and I dined with Mrs. Hill.”

January 6, 1712.—“I went to court, which I found very full, in expectation of seeing Prince Eugène, who landed last night, and lies at Leicester House; he was not to see the queen till six this evening. I hope and believe he comes too late to do the Whigs any good. . . . I went at six to see the prince at court, but he was gone in to see the queen, and when he came out Mr. Secretary screened me from him with his great periwig. I’ll tell you a good passage: as Prince Eugene was going with Mr. Secretary to court, he told the secretary ‘that Hoffmann, the emperor’s resident, said to his highness that it was not

¹ *A bite*, equivalent to the phrase *a sell*, used to mean a delusion.

proper to go to court without a long wig, and his was a tied-up one. Now, says the prince, I knew not what to do, for I never had a long periwig in my life; and I have sent to all my valets and footmen, to see whether any of them have one, that I might borrow it, but none of them has any.' Was not this spoken very greatly with some sort of contempt?"

Besides being a record of his own doings, Swift's Journal records many interesting incidents of the time for Stella's benefit. The following extract shows that excitement about war, politics, and national debts had driven at least one poor man stark mad.

London, November 18, 1710.—"Coming home at seven, a gentleman unknown stopped me in the Pall Mall and asked my advice; said he had been to see the queen (who had just come to town), and the people in waiting would not let him see her; that he had two hundred thousand men ready to serve her in the war; that he knew the queen perfectly well, and had an apartment at court, and if she heard he was there she would send for him immediately; that she owed him two hundred thousand pounds, &c., and he desired my opinion whether he should go try again whether he could see her; or because, perhaps, she was weary after her journey, whether he had not better stay till to-morrow. I had a mind to get rid of my companion, and begged him of all love to wait on her immediately; for that to my knowledge the queen would admit him; that this was an affair of great importance, and required despatch; and I instructed him to let me know the success of his business, and come to the Smyrna coffee-house, where I would wait for him till midnight; and so ended this adventure. I would fain have given the man half-a-crown, but I was afraid to offer it him, lest he should be offended; for,

besides his money, he said he had a thousand pounds a year."

Then comes a note throwing curious light on popular taste.

March 24, 1711.—"We have let Guiscard be buried at last, after showing him pickled in a trough this fortnight for twopence apiece; and the fellow that showed would point to his body, and, 'See gentlemen, this is the wound that was given him by his grace the Duke of Ormond'; and 'this is the wound' &c.; and then the show was over, and another set of rabble would come in."

The private affairs of his friends come in for frequent notice.

August 29, 1711.—"I dined to-day with Lord Abercorn, and took my leave of them; they set out to-morrow for Chester, and, I believe, will now fix in Ireland. They have made a pretty good journey of it. His eldest son is married to a lady with ten thousand pounds; and his son has to-day got a prize in the lottery of four thousand pounds, besides two small ones of two hundred pounds each; nay, the family was so fortunate, that my lord bestowing one ticket, which is a hundred pounds, to one of his servants, who had been his page, the young fellow got a prize, which has made it another hundred."

November 8, 1711.—"Lord Ashburnham told me to-day at the coffee-house that Lord Harley¹ was yesterday morning married to the Duke of Newcastle's daughter, the great heiress, and it got all about the town. But I saw Lord Harley yesterday at noon in his nightgown,² and he dined in the city with Prior and others, so it is not true; but I hope it will be so, for I know it has been privately managing this long time; the lady will not have half her father's estate, for the duke left Lord Pelham's son his heir. The widow duchess will not stand to the will, and she is now

¹ Eldest son of the Earl of Oxford.

² The term *nightgown*, at this time, was used for *dressing-gown*.

at law with Pelham. However, at worst, the girl will have about ten thousand pounds a year to support the honour, for lord treasurer will never save a groat for himself. Lord Harley is a very valuable young gentleman, and they say the girl is handsome, and has good sense, but red hair."

March 2, 1712.—"I was awakened at three this morning, my man and the people of the house telling me of a great fire in the Haymarket. I slept again, and two hours after my man came in again, and told me it was my poor brother¹ Sir William Wyndham's house burnt, and that two maids, leaping out of an upper room to avoid the fire, both fell on their heads, one of them upon the iron spikes before the door, and both lay dead in the streets. It is supposed to have been some carelessness of one or both those maids. The Duke of Ormond was there helping to put out the fire. Brother Wyndham gave £6,000 but a few months ago for that house, as he told me, and it was very richly furnished. I shall know more particulars at night. He (Wyndham) married Lady Catherine Seymour, the Duke of Somerset's daughter; you know her, I believe. At night.—Wyndham's young child escaped very narrowly; Lady Catherine escaped barefoot: they all went to Northumberland House. Mr. Bridge's house, next door, is damaged much, and was likely to be burnt. Wyndham has lost above £10,000 by this accident—his lady above a thousand pounds' worth of clothes. It was a terrible accident. He was not at court to-day."

Then we get a characteristic story about the Duchess of Marlborough's meanness.

¹ Wyndham was a member of the literary club above mentioned, the members of which called themselves brothers. Swift thus speaks of Mr. Masham's little boy as his nephew, Masham also being a member.

April 11, 1712.—“I dined at lord treasurer’s, with his Saturday company. . . . Lord treasurer showed us a small picture, enamelled work, and set in gold, worth about twenty pounds: a picture, I mean, of the queen, which she gave to the Duchess of Marlborough, set in diamonds. When the duchess was leaving England, she took off all the diamonds, and gave the picture to one Mrs. Higgins (an old intriguing woman whom everybody knows), bidding her make the best of it she could. Lord treasurer sent to Mrs. Higgins for this picture, and gave her a hundred pounds for it. Was ever such an ungrateful beast as that duchess? Or did you ever hear such a story? . . . She takes off the diamonds, and gives away the picture to an insignificant woman, as a thing of no consequence, and gives it to her to sell, like a piece of old-fashioned plate. Is she not a detestable slut?”

Swift was now at last able to indulge his fondness for becoming a patron. There is quite a pathetic story connected with one of his *protégés* named Harrison. He is first mentioned in 1710.

October 13, 1710.—“There is a young fellow here in town we are all fond of, and about a year or two come from the university—one Harrison, a little pretty fellow, with a great deal of wit, good sense, and good nature; has written some mighty pretty things; that in your 6th Miscellanea about the Sprig of an Orange is his: he has nothing to live on but being governor to one of the Duke of Queensberry’s sons for forty pounds a year. The fine fellows are always inviting him to the tavern, and make him pay his club. Henley is a great crony of his: they are often at the tavern at six or seven shillings reckoning, and always make the poor lad pay his full share. A colonel and a lord were at him and me the same way to-night: I absolutely refused, and made

Harrison lag behind, and persuaded him not to go to them."

Swift took him up, introduced him to the ministry, and exerted himself so much that the young man was appointed secretary to the English Embassy at Utrecht. It was a magnificent post, the salary being a thousand pounds a year. But, alas, salaries in those happy-go-lucky days though magnificent in amount were rarely paid with much regularity. Poor Harrison returned from Utrecht in January, 1713, without having received a groat. He was, on the other hand, three or four hundred pounds in debt. "Harrison was with me this morning," says Swift; "we talked for three hours, and then I carried him to court. When we went down to the door of my lodgings I found a coach waited for him; I chid him for it, but he whispered me it was impossible to do otherwise; and in the coach he told me he had not one farthing in his pocket to pay it; and therefore took the coach for the whole day, and intended to borrow money somewhere or other." Yet even now, though Swift dunned the Government on Harrison's behalf, nothing was done. At last, on February 12th, a letter came to Swift to say that his poor *protégé* was very ill with inflammation of the lungs. Swift hurried to his bedside, found him in great danger, and went off to Lord Bolingbroke. The latter, with characteristic generosity,¹ sent thirty guineas out of his own pocket and gave Swift an order for one hundred pounds on the treasury. Swift obtained the latter sum the following day. Let him tell the sequel of the episode himself.

February 14, 1713.—"I took Parnell (the poet) this

¹ For this compare Swift's Journal for February 13th, same year: "I was to see a poor poet, one Mr. Diaper, in a nasty garret, very sick. I gave him twenty guineas from Lord Bolingbroke." Swift also notes Bolingbroke's kindness to the poet Parnell.

morning, and we walked to see poor Harrison. I had the hundred pounds in my pocket, I told Parnell I was afraid to knock at the door; my mind misgave me. I knocked, and his man in tears told me his master was dead an hour before. Think what grief this is to me! I went to his mother, and have been ordering things for his funeral, with as little cost as possible, to-morrow at ten at night. Lord treasurer was much concerned when I told him. I could not dine with lord treasurer, nor anywhere else; but got a bit of meat towards evening. No loss ever grieved me so much: poor creature! I send this away to-night, and am sorry it must go while I am in so much grief."

In the spring of 1712 London was much alarmed by the exploits of the Mohocks. The latter were young men of family who "... flown with insolence and wine" sallied forth nightly into the streets and took advantage of the inefficiency of the watch and the absence of illumination to smash windows, pull down signs, wrench off door-knockers, and, what was more important, waylay and assault peaceable citizens. Their outrages soon became so flagrant as to cause a general scare. A royal proclamation was published against them. Troops were called out to patrol the streets. Addison and Steele devoted whole pages of *The Spectator* to accounts of their misdeeds. They were supposed to be especially hostile to prominent adherents of the Tory Government, and Swift himself was consequently in much alarm, as the following extracts will show.

March 8, 1712.—"Did I tell you of a race of rakes, called the Mohocks, that play the devil about this town every night, slit people's noses, and bid them, &c.?"

March 9th.—"... Young Davenant was telling us at court how he was set upon by the Mohocks, and

how they ran his chair through with a sword. It is not safe being in the streets at night for them. The Bishop of Salisbury's son is said to be of the gang. They are all Whigs; and a great lady sent to me to speak to her father and to lord treasurer, to have a care of them, and to be careful likewise of myself; for she heard they had malicious intentions against the ministers and their friends. I know not whether there be anything in this, though others are of the same opinion. The weather still continues very fine and frosty. I walked in the park this evening, and came home early to avoid the Mohocks."

March 12, 1712.—"Here is the devil and all to do with these Mohocks. Grub Street papers about them fly like lightning, and a list printed of near eighty put into several prisons, and all a lie; and I begin almost to think there is no truth, or very little, in the whole story. He that abused Davenant was a drunken gentleman; none of that gang. My man tells me that one of the lodgers heard in a coffee-house, publicly, that one design of the Mohocks was upon me if they could catch me; and though I believe nothing of it, I forbear walking late, and they have put me to the charge of some shillings already."

March 15, 1712.—"I am come home and got to bed. I came afoot, but had my man with me. Lord treasurer advised me not to go in a chair, because the Mohocks insult chairs more than they do those on foot. They think there is some mischievous design in those villains."

March 16th.—"Lord Winchelsea told me to-day that two of the Mohocks had caught a maid of old Lady Winchelsea's at the door of their house in the park, with a candle, and had just lighted out somebody. They cut all her face, and beat her, without any provocation."

March 26th.—"Our Mohocks go on still and cut people's faces every night, but they sha'n't cut mine. I

like it better as it is. The dogs will cost me at least a crown a week in chairs. I believe the souls of your houghers of cattle have got into them, and now they don't distinguish between a cow and a Christian."

Duelling was extremely in vogue at this time. The affair referred to in the ensuing passage arose from a mere tavern quarrel.

Chelsea, May 9, 1711.—"Dr. Freind came this morning to visit Atterbury's lady and children as a physician, and persuaded me to go with him to town in his chariot. He told me he had been an hour before with Sir Cholmley Dering, Charles Dering's nephew, and head of that family in Kent, for which he is knight of the shire. He said he left him dying of a pistol-shot quite through the body, by one Mr. Thornhill. They fought at sword and pistol this morning in Tuttle Fields, their pistols so near that the muzzles touched. Thornhill discharged first, and Dering, having received the shot, discharged his pistol as he was falling, so it went into the air. The story of this quarrel is long. Thornhill had lost seven teeth by a kick in the mouth from Dering, who had first knocked him down. This was above a fortnight ago. Dering was next week to be married to a fine young lady. This makes a noise here; but you won't value it."

Sir Cholmley forgave his adversary on his death-bed. Thornhill was brought to trial, but acquitted. This, however, availed him little.

On August 21, 1711, Swift writes:—"Thornhill, who killed Sir Cholmley Dering, was murdered by two men on Turnham Green last Monday night; as they stabbed him, they bid him remember Sir Cholmley Dering. They had quarrelled at Hampton Court, and followed and stabbed him on horseback."

This duel, however, sinks into insignificance when com-

pared with that between the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Mohun. The latter was a man of very bad reputation. A gambler, a debauchee, and an assassin, he had long acted as "bully" to the Whig party.¹ The Duke of Hamilton, a prominent Tory, was, in 1712, designated Ambassador to France. Mohun, who was engaged in a lawsuit with his grace, seized the opportunity to force a quarrel on him. They met early in the morning of November 15th, in Hyde Park, the duke being attended by his kinsman, Colonel Hamilton, Mohun by General Macartney. In accordance with the custom of the time, the seconds engaged as well as the principals. The weapons used were swords. After a brief but furious exchange of passes, the duke ran his opponent through the body, but received a bad wound himself at the same moment. What then happened is uncertain. The two seconds desisted at the fall of their principals, and ran up to render assistance; and it was declared that Macartney now treacherously gave the already wounded duke a mortal stab. Macartney promptly fled, but returned on hearing that a reward was offered for his apprehension. In spite of Colonel Hamilton's testimony, he was found guilty of manslaughter only, and, by "pleading his clergy," escaped all punishment. Swift's account of this affair and its consequences is so interesting that I append it in full :

November 15, 1712.—"Before this comes to your hands you will have heard of the most terrible accident that hath almost ever happened. This morning, at eight, my man brought me word that Duke Hamilton had fought with Lord Mohun and killed him, and was brought home

¹ Mohun had already assisted his friend, Captain Hill, to murder the actor Will Mountford, Mrs. Bracegirdle's favourite. My readers will remember the part played by Mohun, and the Hamilton-Mohun duel, in Thackeray's novel of "Esmond."

wounded. I immediately sent him to the duke's house, in St. James' Square; but the porter could hardly answer for tears, and a great rabble was about the house. In short, they fought at seven this morning. The dog Mohun was killed on the spot; and, while the duke was over him, Mohun shortened his sword, stabbed him in at the shoulder to the heart. The duke was helped towards the cake-house by the ring in Hyde Park (where they fought), and died on the grass, before he could reach the house, and was brought home in his coach by eight, while the poor duchess was asleep. Macartney and one Hamilton were the seconds, who fought likewise, and both are fled. I am told that a footman of Lord Mohun's stabbed Duke Hamilton, and some say Macartney did so too. Mohun gave the affront, and yet sent the challenge. I am infinitely concerned for the poor duke, who was a frank, honest, good-natured man. I loved him well, and I think he loved me better. He had the greatest mind in the world to go with me to France, but durst not tell it me; and those he did tell said I could not be spared, which was true. They have removed the poor duchess to a lodging in the neighbourhood, where I have been with her two hours, and am just come away. I never saw so melancholy a scene; for, indeed, all reasons for real grief belong to her; nor is it possible for anybody to be a greater loser in all regards. She has moved my very soul. The lodging was inconvenient, and they would have removed her to another; but I would not suffer it, because it had no room backward, and she must have been tortured with the noise of the Grub Street screamers mentioning her husband's murder in her ears."

November 16th.—"I sent a letter early this morning to Lady Masham, to beg to write some comforting words to the poor duchess. . . . She has promised me to get the

queen to write to the duchess kindly on this occasion, and to-morrow I will beg lord treasurer to visit and comfort her. I have been with her two hours again, and find her worse. Her violences not so frequent, but her melancholy more formal and settled. She has abundance of wit and spirit; about thirty-three years old; handsome and airy, and seldom spared anybody that gave her the least provocation, by which she had many enemies and few friends. Lady Orkney, her sister-in-law, is come to town on this occasion, and has been to see her, and behaved herself with great humanity. They have been always very ill together, and the poor duchess could not have patience when people told her I went often to Lady Orkney's. But I am resolved to make them friends; for the duchess is now no more the subject of envy, and must learn humility from the severest master—Affliction. I design to make the ministry put out a proclamation (if it can be found proper) against that villain Macartney. . . .”

November 17th.—“I was to-day at noon with the Duchess of Hamilton again, after I had been with Lady Orkney, and charged her to be kind to her sister in affliction. The duchess told me Lady Orkney had been with her, and that she did not treat her as gently as she ought. They hate one another; but I will try to patch it up. . . .”

January 14, 1713.—“I then went to the Duchess of Hamilton, who never grieved, but raged and stormed and railed. She is pretty quiet now, but has a diabolical temper.”

December 18th.—“We hear Macartney is gone over to Ireland. Was it not comical for a gentleman to be set upon by highwaymen, and to tell them he was Macartney! Upon which they brought him to a justice of

peace, in hopes of reward, and the rogues were sent to gaol. Was it not great presence of mind?"

From the purely personal point of view, the chief interest of the "Journal to Stella" lies in the light it throws on Swift's own feelings towards the latter. In the passages in which she is mentioned he drops the politician and becomes the man. Written in the "little language" in which he had prattled with her when a child at Moor Park, they show how intimate and exclusive was the bond between them. They teem with abbreviations, allusions, and pet names, which could be known to them alone. Swift himself is PDFR, FR, or Podefar, which, according to Mr. Forster, may be interpreted as equivalent to, poor dear foolish rogue. Sometimes he styles himself Presto, the Italian equivalent of "Swift." Stella is PPT, *i.e.*, poppet, or poor pretty thing, but her most frequent designation is MD, my dear. DD or D stands for Stella's companion Mrs. Dingley, the latter being also indicated by the letters ME, Madame Elderly. FW stands for farewell. LFLE may mean "truly," "lazy," or may be intended as an exclamation "there, there!" But other words in the passages meant for Stella are, as it were, "translated" into the little language. "When I am writing in our language I make up my mouth just as if I were speaking it!" The little language, in fact, is that of a man imitating the prattle of a child. As editors of Swift have usually omitted or transformed passages written in the little language, I append a few original illustrations*:

February 23, 1712.—"I am going out; and must carry zis in my Pottick to give it at some general post-house. I will talk further with oo at night. I suppose in my next

* See Forster, "Life of Swift," Bk. vi., sections ii. and iii.

I shall answer a letter from MD that will be sent me. On Tuesday it will be four weeks since I had your last. . . . Farewell, mine deeleast rife deeleast char Ppt, MD MD MD Ppt, FW, Lele MD, ME, ME, ME, ME adeu, Lazy ones, Lele, Lele, all a Lele."

April 6, 1713.—"It is rainy weather again; nevre saw ze zike. This letter shall go to-morrow; remember, ung oomens, it is seven weeks since oor last, and I allow oo but five weeks; but oo have been galloping in the country to Swanton's. Oh pray tell Swanton I had his letter. . . . Nite, deeleast MD." April 7.—"I have not been abroad, you may be sure; so I can say nothing to-day, but that I rove MD Ppt tettle zan ever if possibere. . . . Does this perplex you? Hat care I? But rove Pdfr, sawey Pdfr. Farewell, deeleast MD, MD, MD, FW FW FW ME ME ME Lele. . . . Nite de Sollahs. Late. Rove Pdfr.

How eagerly he received news of her is shown by his countless allusions to her daily pursuits in Ireland. Night and day she is the great solace of his thoughts. December 1, 1710, he writes:—"I was dreaming the most melancholy things in the world of poor Stella, and was grieving and crying all night. Pshaw! It is foolish. I will rise and divert myself; so good morrow, and God of His infinite mercy keep and protect you."

Constantly in the course of a letter he breaks into pretty childish rhymes:

"Be you lords, or be you earls,
You must write to naughty girls."

Or take this New Year's greeting for January 1, 1711:

"I wish you both a merry New Year,
Roast beef, mince pies, and good strong beer,

And me a share of your good cheer ;
That I was there or you were here,
And you are a little saucy dear."

He draws up rules for writing :

" Mr. White and Mr. Red
Write to MD when abed :
Mr. Black and Mr. Brown
Write to MD when you are adown :
Mr. Oak and Mr. Willow
Write to MD on your pillow."

A hard task-mistress to be sure ! But his toils are richly rewarded when he receives a letter from her.

London, March 28, 1711.—“ ‘ O faith, you’re an impudent, saucy couple of sluttekins for presuming to write so soon,’ said I to myself this morning ; who knows but there may be a letter from MD at the coffee-house ? Well, you must know, and so I just now sent Patrick, and he brought me three letters, but not one from MD ; no, indeed, for I read all the superscriptions ; and not one from MD. One I opened, it was from the Archbishop ; t’other I opened, it was from Staunton ; the third I took, and looked at the hand. ‘ Whose hand is this ?’ says I ; yes, says I, ‘ Whose hand is this ?’ Then there was wax between the folds : then I began to suspect ; then I peeped ; faith, it was Wall’s hand after all : then I opened it in a rage, and then it was little MD’s hand, dear, little, pretty, charming MD’s sweet hand again.”

And this is how Swift begins a letter in answer :

London, April 5, 1711.—“ Now let us proceed to examine a saucy letter from one madam MD. God Almighty bless poor dear Stella, and send her a great many birthdays, all happy, and healthy, and wealthy, and with me ever together, and never asunder again, unless by

chance. When I find you are happy or merry there, it makes me so here, and I can hardly imagine you absent when I am reading your letter or writing to you."

In the minute description which Swift gives to Stella of his daily life during this period, one traces the feeling which prompts every lover, in writing to a mistress, to imbue her with his own feelings and envelope her with his own individuality. In the letters to Stella, Swift found a world to himself in which the colder interests of statesmanship and society intruded not—a world, too, in which he could escape even from that conjured spirit which in his lonely moments tormented him with threatenings of he knew not what. That Stella alone engrossed his heart is obvious to any one who will trouble to read a few pages of the *Journal*. But Swift would not have been himself had he not, during this three years' absence, formed another tie. As early as 1708 Swift had become acquainted with the widow of a Dutch merchant, named Mrs. Vanhomrigh. She had two sons and two daughters; Hester, the elder of the two latter, being destined to play in Swift's career a romantic but lamentable part. On his coming to London in 1710 he took lodgings in Bury Street, in which the Vanhomrigh's lived; and his connection with the family soon became extremely intimate.

Hester Vanhomrigh was now in her twenty-first year. To an engaging air she united intellectual ability and a taste for the higher arts unknown to the ladies of that time. Swift loved the adoration of women as much as the homage of men. Between him and Hester Vanhomrigh a close friendship soon arose. He gave her the fanciful name of Vanessa. He corresponded with her in terms of interest and familiarity. Dining constantly at her mother's house, he showed his relish for the witty graces of her conversation. Most of all he delighted in the half-assumed, half-real

deference with which she fell in with the whims and caprices of his imperious nature. Though his own fidelity to Stella remained unaltered, he accepted the gifts of the gods with no thought of the morrow. But what was play to Swift was to Vanessa a grim reality. Of his prior entanglements she knew nothing. That one of his abilities should single her out and show an unaffected delight in her society could have but one meaning; and while Swift's heart remained untouched, Vanessa had learnt to love him with all the intensity of a cultured but ardent nature.

However great his indifference to the feelings of others, it is hard to believe that Swift was ignorant of this inevitable result. Certainly he took no steps to thwart it. During the whole of his stay in England his visits to the Vanhomrigh's never fell off; their home, in fact, became a house of call where he dined or spent the evening when not specially engaged elsewhere. On February 14, 1711, he writes:—"This was Mrs. Vanhomrigh's daughter's birthday, and Mr. Ford and I were invited to dinner to keep it, and we spent the evening there drinking punch. That was our way of beginning Lent." They evidently began Lent well, for on the following morning the Rev. Dr. Swift was far too ill to go to church. In Swift's frequent references to Mrs. Vanhomrigh's hospitality, the graces of the fair Vanessa remain untold. But Stella, with feminine curiosity, heightened by love's natural alarm, began to grow suspicious. She could understand Swift's constant visits to the leaders of the political or social world. But who were these Vanhomrighs? Are they people of *consequence*? she asks him. If not, why does he go there so often? Swift trying, as men will always try, to put back the evil day, waits a little, and then writes back to say that the Vanhomrigh's are people of very great consequence. Lady

Betty Butler goes there ; also, Lady Betty Germaine ! Wherefore, why should not Dr. Swift go there too ?

By the date of Swift's departure for Ireland in June, 1713, relations with Vanessa were reaching a crisis. Womanly refinement prevented a declaration of her love ; but she appeals for sympathy and craves a continuance of their affection in terms of heart-broken despair. Yet even now, either Swift's courage failed him, or pride at his poor slave's abasement proved too strong for his better nature. He answered in terms which might mean everything or nothing, and sailed for Ireland, reserving for himself the full expectation of endless trouble and for Vanessa a frightful legacy of woe.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TORY DOWNFALL.

Swift Installed Dean of St. Patrick's—Money troubles—Archbishop King—Swift goes to Laracor—Regrets England—Decline of the Tories during his absence—Quarrel Between Oxford and Bolingbroke—Swift pressed to return—Consents—Letter to Lord Oxford on the death of his daughter—Renewed quarrel with Steele—Attacks on the latter in the "Importance of the Guardian" and the "Public Spirit of the Whigs"—The parliamentary struggle—The succession question—Increasing bitterness between Oxford and Bolingbroke—Swift's attempt to reconcile them—His error—Literary life—Swift's depression at the state of affairs—He retires to Letcombe—Delight of the Whigs—Their lampoons—Relations with Vanessa—Continued contest between the ministers—Bolingbroke's vigour—Oxford at last dismissed—Bolingbroke's betrayal in the hour of triumph—Tory collapse—Swift returns to Ireland.

ON June 13, 1713, Swift was installed Dean of St. Patrick's. The deanery was worth about £700 a year, and Swift was able to retain his living of Laracor. He was, however, compelled to pay to his predecessor, Dr. Sterne, the sum of £800 for the deanery house; first-fruits amounted to £150; and the fees for patent and installation brought the initial cost up to £1,000. He applied, through Lord Oxford, for a special grant to this amount from the treasury. But there seemed small chance of a favourable reply, and Dr. Swift ruefully concluded that it would be a considerable time before he

derived any real advantage from his new preferment. His superior, Dr. King, Archbishop of Dublin, was the most unsympathetic of mankind. At a time when Swift's energies were being strained to the utmost in a great political struggle, and his social talents were exacting the admiration of a proud aristocracy, King had written to suggest, as a fit subject for his abilities, the composition of some work on Divinity. "Your knowledge of the world and reading," said his lordship with unconscious sarcasm, "will enable you to furnish such a piece, with such uncommon remarks, as will render it both profitable and agreeable above most things that pass the press." "A rare spark this, with a ——!" writes Swift to Stella, his fury breaking out against this would-be mentor. When Swift, full of rage at the way he had been shelved, came back to Dublin, King put himself forward again. Swift's predecessor had begun to build a steeple for St. Patrick's Church. "Bricks and lime were good and cheap," said his lordship, and if Swift pushed on the work he would give great satisfaction to the good people of Dublin.

The change from the throbbing social and political life of London to its feeble imitation in the Irish capital, soon became unendurable. As was usually the case at times of depression, Swift suffered fearfully from his old complaints of giddiness and deafness. After a few weeks of Dublin, therefore, he hurried off to the seclusion of Laracor. "I am fittér now," he said, "to look after willows and to cut hedges than to meddle with affairs of state. I must order one of the workmen to drive those cows out of my island and make up the ditch again: a work much more proper for a country vicar than driving out factions and fencing against them." But the willows cried peace when there was no peace. Stella, with her friend Mrs. Dingley, was settled at a cottage in the neighbourhood. But

Swift's intimacy with her was clouded by the memory of Vanessa. Undeterred by his coldness, the latter continued to write by every post. "I really believe," she says, "before you leave Ireland, I shall give you just reason to wish I did not know my letters, or at least that I could not write; and I had rather you should wish so than entirely forget me. Confess, have you thought of me once since you wrote to my mother at Chester? . . . Mr. Lewis has given me the 'Dialogues des Morts'; and I am so charmed with them that I am resolved to quit my body, let the consequence be what it will, except you will talk to me, for I find no conversation on earth comparable to yours; so if you care I should stay on earth, do but talk, and you will keep me with pleasure." To return to England meant a meeting with Vanessa. But Swift was too confident of his own powers to fear the issue. He had a low idea of the strength of woman's love, and even now he thought that a little diplomacy would cure his admirer's infatuation. It may be, too, that he actually missed her brilliant wit and educated talk, and with characteristic indifference to the possible results of his weakness, wished once again to taste their charms. Swift began to dream of England. He wrote to Atterbury,¹ complaining that he was ill at ease, and hinting at a visit to that prelate in the coming October. Fortunately the course of events soon gave him an excuse to return still sooner.

With the departure of Swift from London the Tory ministry had fallen upon evil days. The successful completion of the peace seemed to have exhausted their energies. Bolingbroke, with a bold contempt for the economic fallacies of the time, had brought forward a commercial treaty with France which practically amounted to free trade. After long debates it was thrown

¹ Then Bishop of Rochester and Dean of Westminster.

out by a House of Commons in which manufacturing interests were strongly represented; and the Whigs, flushed with success, were carrying on the campaign against the Government with the most implacable determination. The charge that the Government were secretly plotting a Jacobite restoration on Anne's death had acquired strength from the attempted approximation to France, and was being worked with great effect. But the weakest point of the Tory ministry was to be found in their own disunion. Bolingbroke had long viewed the incapacity and procrastination of the lord treasurer with bitter disgust. The origin of this feeling was sometimes assigned to the popularity which Oxford had, to the prejudice of his younger colleague, acquired from Guiscard's attempt two and a half years before. Hostility between the two ministers, however, was inevitable from the very first. As Swift put it in his "Inquiry into the Behaviour of the Queen's last Ministry":

"This minister (Lord Oxford) had stronger passions than the secretary, but kept them under stricter government. My Lord Bolingbroke was of a nature frank and open, and as men of great genius are superior to common rules, he seldom gave himself the trouble of disguising or subduing his resentments, although he was ready enough to forget them. In matters of state, as the earl was too reserved, so perhaps the other was too free, not from any incontinency of talk, but from the mere contempt of multiplying secrets, although the graver counsellors imputed this liberty of speech to vanity or lightness. And upon the whole, no two men could differ more in their diversions, their studies, their ways of transacting business, their choice of company, or conversation."

Like Canning in the case of Castlereagh, it soon became clear to Bolingbroke that his colleague's continuance in



Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford.

the great and numerous in which a manufacturing class was represented; and the Whigs, who were carrying on the campaign against the Government with the most implacable determination, charged that the Government were more anxious to restore Anne's death sentence than to save her from the attempted assassination. The charge worked with great effect. In the present of the Tory ministry was to be found a man who Bolingbroke had long viewed with distrust, and premeditation of the lord treasurer was unjust. The origin of this feeling was somewhat due to the popularity which Oxford had, to the prominence of his younger colleague, acquired from Guinevere's attempt two and a half years before. Hostility between the two ministers, however, was inevitable from the very first. As Swift put it in his "Inquiry into the Behaviour of the Queen's last Ministry":

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Like Canning in the case of Castlereagh, it was clear to Bolingbroke that his colleague's strength lay



Per G. Kneller, pinax.

Dauvions, ph. sc.

J. Smith, sc.

Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford.

THE NEW
ALPHABET

office meant ruin. A ministry cannot live on the memory of past successes. The peace completed, a new policy was needed. But it was hopeless to seek for this from Oxford. So far from originating, the lord treasurer refused even to accept suggestions. When asked for a statement of the ministerial programme, he drank claret and smiled. If pressed, he drank more claret, and said "all would be well." If bullied, he collapsed into vacancy.

Mr. Erasmus Lewis, Oxford's private secretary, remembered that the one person who enjoyed enough influence with both Bolingbroke and Oxford to arrange their differences was Swift. He soon began to write letter after letter imploring Swift's presence for this important purpose. The lord treasurer himself favoured the proposal. The invitation was none the less palatable because it amounted to a confession on the part of the ministry that in discarding Swift they had committed a grave mistake. Swift jumped at the proposal, and on August 31st he left Ireland in such hurry as to omit saying good-bye to Archbishop King, who was grievously angered by the slight. Parliament had been dissolved in July, and Swift thus arrived on the eve of a general election. He received a warm welcome from all his friends, especially from Lord Oxford, and soon settled down in the midst of his old circle. In November the lord treasurer suffered a heavy bereavement by the loss of his daughter, Lady Carmarthen. Swift's letter of condolence on this occasion is so characteristic of the writer, and so superior in style to the usual epistles of this nature, that the following extract from it may be of interest :

"November 21, 1713.

"... I have often said to your lordship, 'That I never knew any one by many degrees so happy in their domestics

as you'; and I affirm you are so still, though not by so many degrees: from whence it is very obvious that your lordship should reflect upon what you have left, and not upon what you have lost.

"To say the truth, my lord, you began to be too happy for a mortal; much more happy than is usual with the dispensations of Providence long to continue. You had been the great instrument of preserving your country from foreign and domestic ruin; you have had the felicity of establishing your family in the greatest lustre, without any obligation to the bounty of your prince, or any industry of your own: you have triumphed over the violence and treachery of your enemies by your courage and abilities: and, by the steadiness of your temper, over the inconstancy and caprice of your friends. Perhaps your lordship has felt too much complacency within yourself upon this universal success: and God Almighty, who would not disappoint your endeavours for the public, thought fit to punish you with a domestic loss, where He knew your heart was most exposed; and, at the same time, has fulfilled His own wise purposes by rewarding in a better life that excellent creature he has taken from you."

But political affairs were already engaging Swift's most earnest attention. The present struggle was very different to that which he had quitted a few months ago. As happens in all public contests, the great question of the day once settled, hatred of persons had taken the place of hatred of abuses. The Treaty of Utrecht had been signed and sealed. The ministry, sphinx-like, gave no sign of their next intended measure; and the leaders on each side had no other resource but mutual revilings. Every lover of literature will regret that, in this dishonourable task, the chief burden should have been thrown on Steele and Swift. Some malignant genius had inspired honest

Richard Steele with the idea that the care spent on those exquisite pictures of contemporary manners, which have made *The Spectator* of Queen Anne's reign a possession for all time, was thrown away. He must needs blossom forth into a great political writer, and waste talents designed for the amusement of succeeding ages on the ephemeral interests of party warfare.¹ The Treaty of Utrecht had declared that the fortifications of Dunkirk were to be dismantled. The Whigs declared that the Tory Government, in their fondness for France, were conniving at an evasion of this article, and Steele was called upon to state the Whig view in a pamphlet entitled, "The Importance of Dunkirk." On the Tory side, Swift promptly answered it, December, 1713, by "The Importance of *The Guardian*." The title of the latter indicates its import. *The Guardian* was Steele's own paper, and Swift's pamphlet was little more than a bitter personal attack on Steele himself. Steele rejoined by what was intended to be a crushing blow in "The Crisis," a long and laboured indictment of the Treaty of Utrecht and its authors. Swift, whose skill in the talent of abuse gathered strength from its own exercise, responded by "The Public Spirit of the Whigs." Into the merits of these two pamphlets of Swift's it would be idle to enter, save in a purely historical work. That Swift used a disgraceful weapon more skilfully than Steele is not a merit on which his biographers would congratulate him; and Steele's reputation is too firmly fixed to be shaken by the defects of two uninteresting political effusions. The "Importance of *The Guardian*" contains the following diatribe against Steele: "To take the height of his learning, you are to

¹ None of his friends took Steele's politics seriously. "I am in a thousand troubles," writes Addison, "about poor Dick, and wish that his zeal for the public may not be ruinous for himself."

suppose a lad just fit for the university, and sent early from thence into the wide world, where he followed every way of life that might least improve or preserve the rudiments he had got. He has no invention, nor is master of a tolerable style; his chief talent is humour, which he sometimes discovers both in writing and discourse, for after the first bottle he is no disagreeable companion. I never knew him taxed with ill-nature, which has made me wonder how ingratitude came to be his prevailing vice; and I am apt to think it proceeds more from some unaccountable sort of instinct than premeditation. Being the most imprudent man alive, he never follows the advice of his friends, but is wholly at the mercy of fools or knaves, or hurried away by his own caprice, by which he has committed more absurdities in economy, friendship, love, duty, good manners, politics, religion, and writing, than ever fell to one man's share. . . . I would only have his friends be cautious not to reward him too liberally; for, as it was said of Cranmer, 'Do the archbishop an ill turn, and he is your friend for ever'; so I do affirm of your member, 'Do Mr. Steele a good turn, and he is your enemy for ever.'"

In "The Public Spirit of the Whigs," Swift thus describes the appearance of poor Steele's thunderbolt, "The Crisis." "At the destined period the first news we hear is of a huge train of dukes, earls, viscounts, barons, knights, esquires, gentlemen, and others, going to Sam Buckley's, the publisher of 'The Crisis,' to fetch home their cargoes, in order to transmit them by dozens, scores, and hundreds, into the several counties, and thereby to prepare the wills and understandings of their friends against the approaching sessions. Ask any of them whether they have read it, they will answer no; but they have sent it everywhere, and it will do a world of good. It is a

pamphlet, they hear, against the ministry; talks of slavery, France, and the Pretender; they desire no more; it will settle the wavering, confirm the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, inflame the clamorous, although it never be once looked into. I am told, by those who are expert in the trade, that the author and bookseller of this twelve-penny treatise will be greater gainers than from one edition of any folio that has been published these twenty years. What needy writer would not solicit to work under such masters, who will pay us beforehand, take off as much of our ware as we please at our own rates, and trouble not themselves to examine, either before or after they have bought it, whether it be staple or not?"

For the time, victory in this wretched contest lay with the Tories. The Whigs, in spite of the great use they made of the cries, "No foreign influence!" "No Popish Pretender!" were beaten at the polls; and the meeting of parliament on February 16, 1714, seemed to open for the Tories a new lease of power. "There are some who are arrived at that height of malice," said the queen's speech, "as to insinuate that the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover is in danger under my Government." Steele, now member for Stockbridge, had made this very charge in "The Crisis," and after a fierce debate his pamphlet was declared a libel, and himself expelled the House by a majority of 245 to 152. A determined effort was made by the House of Lords to prosecute the anonymous author of "The Public Spirit of the Whigs," but this came to nothing. Swift had in his pamphlet bitterly reviled the Scotch nobility; and the Scotch representative peers went in a body to the queen to demand the punishment of their libeller. Oxford who, whatever his other failings, could lie with the best of them, issued a proclamation offering £300 reward for the author's apprehension.

But as the only person aware of the criminal's name was Oxford himself, Swift's slumbers remained undisturbed.

Undeterred by these early failures, the Whigs continued their attack. While Anne lived the Tories were safe. But her health was extremely bad. An illness in the December of 1713 had nearly proved fatal, and the Whigs were straining every nerve for the establishment of a favourable impression at the court of Hanover, whence the next sovereign, according to the Act of Settlement, was bound to come. They had so thoroughly imbued the Electress Sophia and her son Prince George with the idea that Toryism and Jacobitism were synonymous, that Mr. Thomas Harley, the Government agent who appeared at Hanover early in 1714, met with a very cold reception. The Whigs won over Schutz, the Hanoverian envoy. Prince George had been created Duke of Cambridge in the peerage of England; and, in order to have him on the spot, the Whigs now persuaded him to demand his writ so as to take his seat as a lord of parliament. For the moment this new move rather weakened the Whig cause. The queen was rigidly averse to the presence of the electoral prince in England as a sort of *memento mori*. She wrote a furious letter to Hanover, which so affected the old Electress Sophia, that shortly after reading it the latter was seized with an apoplectic fit, and died on May 28th. Prince George stepped into her place as heir apparent to the English throne. From a wise consideration for Anne's feelings, he declined to come over to England, but he was thoroughly in the Whig interest, and the hopes of that party rose higher than ever.

Meanwhile, the struggle within the ministry increased in bitterness. It would seem that the lord treasurer's influence with the queen was practically gone, and that none knew the fact so well as he. But he loved the

appearance of power, and so long as he could retain it proved impervious to invective or contempt.

"I remember," says Swift, "upon a Saturday, when the ministers and one or two friends of the treasurer constantly met to dine at his house, one of the company attacked him very warmly, on account that a certain lord who perpetually opposed the queen's measures was not dismissed from a great employment which, beside other advantages, gave that lord the power of choosing several members of parliament. The treasurer evaded the matter with his usual answer, 'That this was whipping-day.' Upon which the secretary, Bolingbroke, turning to me, said, 'It was a strange thing that my Lord Oxford would not be so kind to his friends and so just to his own innocence as to vindicate himself where he had no blame; for to his knowledge and the chancellor's (who was then also present) the treasurer had frequently and earnestly moved the queen upon that very point without effect.'" Better, as Danton used to say, be a poor shoemaker than a ruler of men! Of the methods used by Swift to bring about harmony in the ministry and give the Tory policy a definite and clear aim little can be known. From a subsequent letter of his¹ it would seem that, seeing the complete incompatibility between Oxford and his colleagues, Swift actually advised that statesman to resign rather than endanger his whole party by a useless continuance in office. He recommended as the heads of a political scheme—conciliation of the Church, expulsion of Whig swash-bucklers from the army, and the invitation to England, not of the Elector, but of his grandson, who, while amenable to Tory influences, would be too far from the throne to hurt Anne's prejudices by his presence

¹ Letter to Lord Bolingbroke, August 7, 1714.

in England.¹ But Swift's admiration for the lord treasurer was too profound to allow him to be of real use in the present difficulty. With all his acuteness he saw not that, to save the party, his bounden duty was to throw in his lot with Bolingbroke and press on the war against Oxford without compunction. That affection for a patron and a friend disarmed his hostility against a driveller and a dotard does credit to his heart. None the less, his refusal to turn against Oxford on this occasion is a cardinal mistake of his political career.

In the general stagnation of all political endeavour Swift found time to renew his relations with Pope, Arbuthnot, and the other wits. The literary society referred to in the "Journal to Stella," was revived and reorganised as the "Scriblerus Club." The members constantly met at the rooms in St. James's Palace occupied by Arbuthnot, then court physician. Proposals were made for a great united satire on pedantic learning, and the apocryphal instructions of Martinus Scriblerus, an imaginary pedant, were actually commenced by Arbuthnot.

Lord Oxford was delighted with the scheme. The Emperor Ferdinand, during the height of the 1848 revolution in Vienna, occupied his scanty wits by counting and comparing the number of carriages which passed to right and left in front of his palace windows. In the same way Lord Oxford, "at a time when his all was at stake," sent to the Scriblerus Club every day a fresh copy of doggerel verses, each one more feeble, more drivelling, more idiotic than the last. One of these effusions, usually printed in Swift's works, and dated April 14, 1714, runs as follows :

¹ See Swift's "Free Thoughts on the present State of Affairs." This pamphlet was not published.

"I honour the men, sir,
Who are ready to answer,
When I ask them to stand by the queen :
In spite of orators,
And blood-thirsty praters,
Whose hatred I highly esteem.
Let our faith's defender
Keep out every pretender,
And long enjoy her own ;
Thus you four, five,
May merrily live
Till faction is dead as a stone "

Swift's political hopes sank lower every day. "I never," he wrote to Lord Peterborough on May 18th, "led a life so thoroughly uneasy as I do at present. Our situation is so bad that our enemies could not, without abundance of invention and ability, have placed us so ill if we had left it entirely to their management. . . . The height of honest men's wishes at present is to rub on this session, after which nobody has impudence to expect that we shall not immediately fall to pieces ; nor is anything I write the least secret, even to a Whig footman. The queen is pretty well at present, but the least disorder she has puts us all in alarm, and when it is over we act as if she were immortal. Neither is it possible to make any preparation against an evil day. . . . I am sure you would have prevented a great deal of ill if you had continued among us ; but people of my level must be content to have their opinion asked, and to see it not followed."

The division in the ministry grew worse. At last Swift resolved to give up his thankless task. He met Bolingbroke and Oxford for the last time at Lord Masham's towards the end of May, and announced his intention of retiring to the country. He once more warned them of their folly. Lord Bolingbroke was in despair. The lord

treasurer as usual said that all would still be well. Never was seen such a lord treasurer !

The place chosen by Swift for his retreat was the house of an old friend, Mr. Gery, vicar of Letcombe, in Berkshire. The news of his sudden resignation of the post of adviser-in-chief to the Tory ministry was welcomed by the Whigs with a scream of delight. Swift, who had met the most courtly Whig logician and the foulest Whig libeller on their own ground and beaten them with their own weapons—Swift who, at the most dangerous moment, had never been lacking in resource—Swift, who had endowed Toryism with an object and a principle, had despaired of the present Tory ministry ! Who, then, could hope for it ? Immediately the Whig Grub Street writers rushed upon their prey. One morning saw a blasphemous burlesque: "Essays divine, moral, and political, by the author of the 'Tale of a Tub.'" Another saw a simpler but more bitter effusion entitled, "Hue and Cry after Dean Swift," an obvious parody of Swift's own "Hue and Cry after Dismal." The latter consisted of extracts from an imaginary diary kept by Swift himself. That any one should have at this time obtained access to the "Journal to Stella" is impossible. It is, however, very likely that Swift's habit of keeping a Journal was well known. The following extracts will give an idea of this curious lampoon :

Thursday.—"Waked with a headache. Said no prayers that morning. Drest immediately. Looked confounded rakish. Repeated verses whilst I was washing my hands. Resolved (whilst I was putting on my gown) to ridicule the orders of bishops, priests, and deacons, after dinner at my Lord Bolingbroke's. Went to drink tea in York buildings. The earl looked queerly. Left him in a huff. Bid him send for me when he was fit for company. Took

coach to Lord Harry's. The viscount looked whimsically. Left him. Promised to sup with him at earl's. Drove to the Cocoa-tree. Sat till one, musing and thinking of nothing. Played for half an hour with three impertinent puppies, an Irish lord, an English colonel, and a Scotch gamester. Retired into a private corner where a whim came into my head of which I will shortly give the world an account. Went to dine at the George with two papists, three Jacobites, and a Tory. Damned the cook; liked the wine; no wit. All politics; settled the succession. Fixed the place, time, and manner of his landing (the Pretender's). Went to my lodgings at five. Slept. Writ an examiner. Supped at York buildings. Earl and Lord Harry (Oxford and Bolingbroke) part in dudgeon and division. . . ."

Friday.—"Resolve to fast. Send a note to church to pray for the conversion of a great sinner. Read the Bible. Find that no man can serve two masters; and that a house divided against itself cannot stand. Consider of these words, when ye hear of these things flee to the mountains. . . . Don't like things; confirmed concerning animosities between the earl and Lord Harry. In a quandary. Go to the club of ugly faces. Some wit. Much impiety. Drink hard. Am treated. Expenses one shilling. *Mem.*: This day month I had clean sheets."

Nor is there much relief in turning to Swift's relations with Vanessa at this time. That lady had been delighted at his return from Ireland, and it would seem that the old intimacy between the two was speedily renewed. Swift's first letter from Letcombe in Berkshire was written to Vanessa. It gives an excellent description of both his mode of life and state of mind at this time. It is dated June 5, 1714: ". . . I am at a clergyman's house, whom I love very well; but he is such a melancholy, thoughtful

man, partly from nature, and partly by a solitary life, that I shall soon catch the spleen from him. Out of ease and complaisance, I desire him not to alter any of his methods for me, so we dine exactly between twelve and one. At eight we have some bread and butter and a glass of ale, and at ten he goes to bed. Wine is a stranger, except a little I sent him; of which, one evening in two, we have a pint between us. His wife has been this month twenty miles off, at her father's, and will not return these ten days. I never saw her; and perhaps the house will be worse when she comes. I read all day, or walk, and do not speak as many words as I have now writ in three days; so that, in short, I have a mind to steal to Ireland, unless I find myself take more to this way of living, so different, in every circumstance, from what I left. This is the first syllable I have writ to anybody since you saw me. I shall be glad to hear from you, not as you are a Londoner, but as a friend; for I care not threepence for news, nor have heard one syllable since I came here. The Pretender or Duke of Cambridge may both be landed, and I never the wiser; but if this place were ten times worse, nothing shall make me return to town while things are in the situation I left them. I give a guinea a week for my board, and can eat anything."

He writes again to Vanessa a month later, with special reference to her own affairs. Mrs. Vanhomrigh had lately died, leaving considerable debts, and her children were for the time in very straitened circumstances. Poor Vanessa pours all her troubles into Swift's bosom. The latter behaves with much kindness. He not only gives her his sympathy and advice, but offers to become surety in case she wants to borrow money.¹ But as time went

¹ Letter of July, 1714.—"If you want to borrow any money, I would have you send to Mr. Barber or Ben Tooke, which you please, and

on Swift's tone altered. Contemplating a speedy return to Ireland, he was in terror lest she should follow him thither, and he endeavoured by coldness and excuses to uproot that passion which his wilful renewal of their intimacy had planted more firmly than ever.

By the May of 1714 Bolingbroke's indignation against his chief had reached boiling point. The queen might die at any moment. Unless a determined attempt were made to form the Tory party into a compact phalanx before the accession of a Whig puppet in the person of Prince George of Hanover, the doom of Toryism was sealed. The secretary determined to take matters into his own hand.¹ He could reckon on the support of the lord chancellor, Harcourt, and the chancellor of the exchequer, Sir William Wyndham; and he had the ear of Lady Masham, the queen's favourite.

Oxford was known to be bound to the Dissenters. Partly to force his hand, partly to gratify the Church, the Schism Act was pressed forward. It proposed that no one in future should keep a school or act as a tutor unless he first subscribed a declaration to conform to the Church of England, and also obtained a written licence from a bishop. In spite of great opposition it passed the Commons by a majority of nearly two to one. In the Lords an interesting debate ensued. The Earl of Nottingham rather cleverly seized on the opportunity to

let them know it, and the sum, and that I will stand bound for it and send them my bond."

¹ It is impossible in a short biographical work to enter into the much-debated question as to whether Bolingbroke ever intended to bring about a Stuart restoration on Anne's death. I believe he only aimed at putting the Tory party in such a position that when the Elector of Hanover came to the throne, he would have to continue them in office.

make an attack on Swift. "My lords," said he, "I have many children, and I know not whether God Almighty will vouchsafe to let me live to give them the education I could wish they had. Therefore, my lords, I own I tremble when I think that a certain divine, who is hardly suspected of being a Christian, is in a fair way of being a bishop, and may one day give licences to those who shall be entrusted with the education of youth!" Lord Oxford's behaviour was characteristic. On the final reading of the bill on June 10th, when it was carried by 77 to 72, he absented himself from the House.

Oxford had in this instance shown his dislike to the policy of his colleagues. On other points he was equally at variance with them. Bolingbroke drew up a scheme by which notorious Whig officers should be forced to sell their commissions in the army to men of Tory views. The money required was to be paid by the Government. Oxford as usual began by offering no opposition. When the money required was demanded, he drew back and the plan came to nothing. But though the lord treasurer grew more obstinate, more incapable, more unintelligible every day, he clung to office like a leech. There were times when Bolingbroke's heart died within him. "If my grooms," he wrote to Swift, "did not lead a happier life than I, I am sure they would leave my service." At last, towards the end of July, his hopes were realised. On the 27th of that month, after a final and furious altercation between the two leading ministers, carried on in the queen's presence, Anne ordered Oxford to resign his post.

The lord treasurer had for some weeks expected his fall and his nature was too apathetic to be affected by it. In sending the news to Swift, he seized the opportunity to

ask the Dean's opinion on what he was pleased to call an imitation of Dryden :

“ To serve with love,
And shed your blood,
Approved is above.
But here below,
Th' examples show,
'Tis fatal to be good.”

The lines are somewhat above the average of those with which Oxford was wont to weary his friends. It, however, throws a curious light on his vanity that, after ruining his party, he could think of no other theme than his own merits.

Bolingbroke at last found himself chief minister. He tried to persuade himself that he had triumphed. On the very night of July 27th he gave a great dinner party to the Whig leaders, Stanhope, Walpole, and others at his house in Golden Square, and assured them of his fidelity to the House of Hanover. It remained to make a fresh arrangement of the ministry. Bolingbroke himself was to remain first secretary of state and practical prime minister. The treasury was to be put in commission, Sir William Wyndham occupying the post of first lord. Ormond and Harcourt were to remain respectively commander-in-chief and lord chancellor. Bishop Atterbury was to be privy seal, and the Duke of Buckingham president of the council. The Tories were to be made so strong that the new sovereign on his arrival would displace them at his peril. But there was a traitor in the Tory camp who rendered Bolingbroke's efforts unavailing. The Duke of Shrewsbury at that time held the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He had been treated with complete confidence by Bolingbroke. But

Queen Anne was rapidly sinking, and Shrewsbury, convinced that the cause of Toryism was lost, had already concerted a plan for associating himself with the Whigs. While the ministers were in consultation at Kensington on the morning of July 30th, the Dukes of Argyle and Somerset, both Whigs, suddenly appeared in the council chamber. They claimed their right to attend as privy councillors, and after a short delay proposed that the Duke of Shrewsbury should be raised to the post of lord treasurer. Bolingbroke was so disconcerted by this unexpected move that he and his followers were forced into an unwilling assent; and a deputation went to the queen's bedside where Shrewsbury was invested with the white staff of supreme office. Of Bolingbroke's paper schemes and paper ministry nothing more was heard. The queen's death on August 1st found everything prepared for the Elector of Hanover's accession.

"The Earl of Oxford," wrote Bolingbroke to Swift, "was removed on Tuesday; the queen died on Sunday. What a world is this! and how does fortune banter us. . . . Here everything is quiet and will continue so. Besides which, as prosperity divided, misfortune may perhaps to some degree unite us. The Tories seem to resolve not to be crushed, and that is enough to prevent them from being so." He asked Swift not to go to Ireland yet, but the Dean knew better than Bolingbroke that the end was come. Toryism was in *articulo mortis*. Its votaries might heave a sigh over its last moments; but they could do no more. After a parting letter of thanks and commendation to Bolingbroke, Swift, on August 16th left Letcombe for Chester. On August 24th he was back again in Dublin.

So ends Swift's period of political greatness. There was much in it on which in after years he could look

back with pride and satisfaction. He had won political eminence. He had drunk to the full the cup of social homage. But he had also seen a great political party undermined by disunion and destroyed by treachery. He had been drawn into bitter conflict with once-trusted friends. He had seen his own hopes of glory and advancement checked when they were at their apogee; and it was in gloom and bitterness that he entered on his retirement.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DEAN OF ST. PATRICK'S.

Whig revenge on the Tory leaders—Unpopularity of Swift—Settlement in Dublin—His position as Dean of St. Patrick's—Letters to Bolingbroke, Oxford, Lady Bolingbroke, and the Duchess of Ormond—Renewal of friendship with Addison—The story of Vanessa—Poem of "Cadenus and Vanessa"—Vanessa at Marley Abbey—Correspondence between her and Swift—Rupture between them—Vanessa's death—Condition of Ireland at this time—The Catholic peasantry—The ruling Protestant minority—Their grievances, legislative and commercial—Entry of Swift into Irish politics—His "Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures"—His printer prosecuted—Wood's halfpence—Origin of the affair—Its injustice—The "Drapier's Letters"—Alarm of the Government—Wood's patent cancelled—Triumph of Swift's policy—His personal views on his triumph—Growing misanthropy.

NEVER have the hopes of a political party been at lower ebb than those of the Tories during the first few years that followed George I.'s accession. One of the first acts of the new Government was to dismiss Bolingbroke and his colleagues with all the circumstances of disgrace. A Whig ministry, in which Stanhope, Townshend, and Walpole were the most prominent, was called to office; and the general election of 1714 resulted in a large Whig majority. Discredited as traitors, Jacobites, and conspirators, the Tories were for the time unable to make head against the breeze of popular disfavour. But the

Whigs were not content with victory; they must have revenge.¹ A special committee was appointed to investigate the conduct of the late ministry in relation to the peace with France and the succession question. Against Bolingbroke the bitterest animosity prevailed, and the cry for his impeachment soon became irresistible. That great man knew that his known abilities rendered a fair trial exceedingly doubtful. In the present state of party feeling, a bill of attainder, which would preclude his being heard in his own defence, was by no means impossible. He recognised that the game was up, and that nothing remained but to make an effective exit from the scene. On March 25, 1715, he appeared in his box at Drury Lane Theatre. His conversation had never been so gay, his demeanour so nonchalant. As to the threats of the Whigs, he spoke of them with amused contempt. On the following day, London was astonished to hear that he had fled to France. His affected indifference had in reality covered the most bitter exasperation. Young and ambitious, it cut him to the heart to see his political hopes blasted in one untimely moment. In the indignation of a clever man, ruined by his natural inferiors, he shook the dust of his country from off his feet and took service with the Pretender. An Act of Attainder was passed against him in his absence. His example was followed by Ormond. Oxford, stolid to the last, remained behind. He was arrested, and after two years' imprisonment in the Tower brought to trial. But by that time (1717) the Whigs had quarrelled among themselves; Walpole, formerly Oxford's enemy, was now his friend, and the trial ended in nothing.

¹ Walpole said "he wanted words to express the villainy of the late Frenchified ministry." Stanhope wondered that "men who were guilty of such enormous crimes had still the audaciousness to appear in the streets."

Swift, closely as he had been identified with the Tory ministry, escaped prosecution. But his position was for a long time precarious. On his arrival in Dublin he was received with insults and execrations; lampoons were affixed to the doors of his cathedral, and he was assaulted when riding out for exercise. His old associates shunned him as a leper. Erasmus Lewis wrote urging him to destroy his papers. Archbishop King had not forgiven Swift's little lack of courtesy in the preceding year. He was now able to retaliate, and writes, on one occasion, with evident satisfaction: "We have a strong report that my Lord Bolingbroke will return here and be pardoned; certainly it must not be for nothing. I hope he can tell no ill story of you. I add only my prayers for you," &c., &c. Bolingbroke was not very likely to turn king's evidence. But Swift was much annoyed at the implied charge of Jacobitism, and wrote to the archbishop to deny it in the most explicit terms.¹

For the next six years Swift remained in retirement. In his first letters he affected a stoical resignation with his lot. "You are to understand," he writes to Pope, "that I live in the corner of a vast unfurnished house; my family consists of a steward, a groom, a helper in the stable, a footman and an old maid, who are all at board-wages; and when I do not dine abroad or make an entertainment (which last is very rare), I eat a mutton-pie and drink half a pint of wine; my amusements are defending my small dominions against the archbishop, and endeavouring to reduce my rebellious choir." The latter were for some time rather more than amusements. Swift was determined to be supreme in his own cathedral. In a letter to Atterbury, dated April 18, 1716, he enumer-

¹ See Swift's letter of December 16, 1716.

ates his various powers with a pompous pride, which no one recalling the more important events in which Swift had recently played so great a part, can read without a smile. "The dean (of St. Patrick's) has great prerogatives. He visits the chapter as ordinary, and the archbishop only visits by the dean. The dean can suspend and sequester any member, and punishes all crimes except heresy, and one or two more reserved for the archbishop. No lease can be let without him. He holds a court-leet in his district, and is exempt from the lord mayor, &c. No chapter can be called but by him, and he dissolves them at pleasure. He disposes absolutely of the petty canons and vicars—choral places. All the dignitaries, &c., swear canonical obedience to him." For some time he encountered a bitter opposition from the different members of his chapter. But the man who had fought and beaten the Whig aristocracy was not to be frightened by the puny weapons of a few minor canons; and the new dean of St. Patrick's had little difficulty in making himself master. It may be mentioned here that the £1,000 Swift hoped for, vanished into thin air on the advent of the Whigs. He was thus for some time much occupied in wiping off the debt incident to his new preferment.

In other letters Swift congratulates himself on his ignorance of contemporary political events. He could not, however, help expressing sympathy for the fate of his old patrons. On Bolingbroke's dismissal, he wrote to him in the mingled tone of seriousness and banter which that brilliant man affected in his own letters. No characteristic of Swift, indeed, is more pleasing than the care with which he adapted his style to the correspondent for the time being.

The following extract is from the letter to Bolingbroke:

" DUBLIN, September 14, 1714.

" MY LORD,—I hope your lordship, who were always so kind to me while you were a servant, will not forget me now in your greatness. I give you this caution, because you will be apt to be exalted in your new station of retirement, which was the only honourable post that those who gave it you were capable of conferring¹. . . . I must be so free as to tell you that this new office of retirement will be harder for you to keep than that of secretary; and you lie under one great disadvantage, besides your being too young; that, whereas none but knaves and fools desire to deprive you of your former post, all the honest men in England will be for putting you out of this."

Swift then proceeds to rally this new Cincinnatus on his rural occupations: ". . . They tell me you have a good crop of wheat, but the barley is bad. Hay will certainly be dear unless we have an open winter. I hope you found your hounds in good condition, and that Bright has not made a stirrup-leather of your jockey-belt. I imagine you now smoking with your humdrum squire (I forget his name), who can go home at midnight and open a dozen gates when he is drunk. I beg your lordship not to ask me to lend you any money. If you will come and live at the deanery, and furnish up an apartment, I will find you in victuals and drink, which is more than ever you got by the court: and, as proud as you are, I hope to see you accept a part of this offer before you die. . . . However, pray God forgive them by whose indolence, neglect, or

¹ Compare for the sentiment here expressed the well-known lines from Addison's "Cato":

"Where vice prevails, and impious men bear sway,
The post of honour is a private station."

want of friendship, I am reduced to live with twenty leagues of salt water between your lordship and me, &c.

“JONATHAN SWIFT.”

Swift's letter to Oxford after that statesman's arrest was very different. Ever suspicious of brilliance, Swift had been completely deluded by Oxford's simple air. The following would have been exaggerated if addressed to Richelieu :

“I do not think myself obliged to regulate my opinions by the opinions of a House of Lords, or Commons; and therefore, however they may acquit themselves in your lordship's case, I shall take the liberty of thinking and calling your lordship the ablest and faithfullest minister and truest lover of your country that this age has produced; and I have already taken care that you shall be so represented to posterity, in spite of all the rage and malice of your enemies. And this I know will not be wholly indifferent to your lordship, who, next to a good conscience, always esteemed reputation your best possession. Your intrepid behaviour under this prosecution astonishes every one but me, who know you so well, and how little it is in the power of human actions or events to discompose you. I have seen your lordship labouring under great difficulties and exposed to great dangers, and overcoming both by the providence of God and your own wisdom and courage. Your life has been already attempted by private malice; it is now pursued by public resentment. Nothing else remained. You were destined to both trials; and the same power which delivered you out of the paws of the lion and the bear will, I trust, deliver you out of the hands of the uncircumcised. . . .”

Nor were Swift's letters to his lady friends less apposite. On Bolingbroke's flight he at once wrote to console Lady

Bolingbroke. How well he succeeded is shown by her reply:

"Your letter came in very good time to me, when I was full of vexation and trouble, which all vanishes, finding you were so good to remember me under my afflictions."

She wrote frequently and at length to Swift, describing her misfortunes. There had been little sympathy between her and her husband. But Lady Bolingbroke was a loyal wife. She was working hard through friends to obtain the king's pardon for her husband, and describes herself to Swift as "a little fury, especially if they dare mention my dear lord without respect." The poor Duchess of Ormond was in similar plight. A sentence of attainder, it must be remembered, involved confiscation of property; and the Duke of Ormond's retreat had left her nearly penniless. "You kindly ask how my affairs go," she writes to Swift on September 14, 1716. "There is yet no end of them, and God only knows when there will be. For when everything was thought done, a sudden blast has blown all hopes away, and then they give me fresh expectations. In the meantime I am forced to live upon the borrow; my goods all taken away that I shall not have so much as a bed to lie upon but what I must buy, and no money of my own to do that with; so that you may imagine me in a cheerful way. I pray God support me."

Besides the task of consoling broken statesmen and distressed women, Swift had a great resource in his literary associations. During the years of his exile he maintained an active correspondence with Pope, Gay, Prior, and Arbuthnot. One great compensation for his political eclipse was found in a renewal of his friendship with Addison. So high was the reputation of the latter that

on the accession of the Whigs to office he was appointed secretary to the new Irish viceroy, Lord Sunderland. In Addison's calm and generous nature there was no place for vindictiveness. On arriving in Dublin he sought out the dean of St. Patrick's. Swift had by political differences been long separated from Addison. But he had never been forced into personal enmity with him. He readily accepted his old friend's overtures, and the intimacy between the two became as close and as delightful as before.¹

We are now come to that important episode in Swift's private life : the story of Vanessa.

In his relations with the fair sex a versatile and sensitive man will aim at the indulgence of every form which those relations may take—the fond, the intellectual, and the gay. The very coldness of Swift's temperament, which enabled him to enjoy, without falling a victim to, feminine fascinations, subjected him to this rule more strongly than other men. Eager to live his life to the full, he had, at one and the same time, found rest in the homely but sincere devotion of poor Stella ; satisfaction in the stately grace of Lady Bolingbroke or the Duchess of Ormond ; and companionship in the cultured mind of Hester Vanhomrigh. Mrs. Vanhomrigh's two sons had survived her but a very short time. The family property consisted mainly of an estate near Celbridge in Ireland, and Vanessa had thus additional excuse besides her passion for Swift for coming over to that country in 1714. She brought with her a younger sister, Mary, who

¹ Addison returned to London in 1715. He married the widowed Countess of Warwick in the following year. There is an extremely kind letter of his, dated 1718, inviting Swift to come and stay with him at Holland House. Addison's premature death on June 17, 1719, deprived Swift of his noblest and best-hearted friend.

appears as Molkin in Swift's letters. Settling first in Dublin, Vanessa soon renewed her relations with the dean. The latter with his curious love for self-analysis had already written for Vanessa's benefit a poem, descriptive of the origin and growth of their intimacy, entitled "Cadenus and Vanessa." Cadenus is merely a transposition of the letters Decanus, the Latin for Dean, and means Swift himself.

Vanessa is represented as a woman of great beauty, whose intellectual gifts, however, make her dislike the brainless fops of high society. Her affection, therefore, concentrates itself on her preceptor, Dr. Swift. The latter is described as—

"Grown old in politics and wit,
Caress'd by ministers of state,
Of half mankind the dread and hate."

He is far too old and crabbed for love's delights, and great is his consternation when he discovers his fair young pupil's secret. To meet her as she wishes is impossible—

"But friendship in its greatest height,
A constant rational delight,
On virtue's basis fix'd to last,
When love's allurements long are past,
Which gently warms but cannot burn,
He gladly offers in return ;
His want of passion will redeem
With gratitude, respect, esteem."

Vanessa, however, declines to accept this offer. She refuses to believe that her tutor's blood is so chilled as to be insensible to the tender passion. She will therefore

[illegible]

1. *Pharmaceutical industry*—United States—History. I. Title. II. Series.

Moreover, despite its acceptance of the idea of a "right to be left alone," the court refuses to believe that her father's action is so "unreasonably" intrusive as to be "unreasonable" to the teacher pursuing a "legitimate" school purpose.



Dawson. ph. sc.

*Hester Vanhomrigh. (Vanessa)
from a picture in the possession of G. Villiers Briscoe Esq.*

take up the part of tutor in her turn, and direct this laggard into the right paths.

The following lines refer to Vanessa's new enterprise. Their ambiguous style lays them open to a very sinister meaning. But our knowledge of Swift's life and character enables us to regard them as harmless though somewhat injudiciously put :

“ But what success Vanessa met
Is to the world a secret yet.
Whether the nymph to please her swain
Talks in a high romantic strain,
Or whether he at last descends
To act with less seraphic ends ;
Or to compound the business, whether
They temper love and books together,
Must never to mankind be told,
Nor shall the conscious muse unfold.”

The worst that can be said of the above passage is that, being intended for Vanessa's ear alone, it put the relations between Swift and that lady in a condition of uncertainty. Chance of a sudden rupture was thus averted. The way was left open for time and explanation to do its work.¹

Swift had by coldness and inuendoes attempted to deter Vanessa from coming to Ireland. When she persisted in her design, it was still open to him by a few decisive words to show her the folly of her hopes. But again he shrank back from his duty. Whether he feared a scene, or wished to continue even now an intimacy in which his intellect delighted, we know not. On hearing of her arrival he tried to dishearten her by references to

¹ The poem “ Cadenus and Vanessa ” was written in 1713. It was revised in 1719, and it is the revised version which has come down to us.

the inconveniences of her new life. She must take care of her health in this damp Irish air. He fears Dublin will be very dismal after London, and the country round is so miserable. There are no walks about as pleasant as the grounds of Marlborough Lodge. But Vanessa was not to be foiled. A desperate appeal to his mercy was followed by wild threats to wreck his peace, and hints at the other passion which she taxed him with concealing from her. Swift gave up the struggle. Stella had, at his special request, come down from Laracor with Mrs. Dingley and taken lodgings on Ormond's Quay. She was constantly at the deanery.¹ But this did not prevent Swift from maintaining close relations with Vanessa. They wrote verses to one another. Swift asked Vanessa's opinion of his work—"Gulliver's Travels"—which was now in composition. Vanessa studied French, and Swift congratulated her on her progress therein in a fluent, though not strictly grammatical, letter in that language.

Meanwhile he strove by secret and underhand methods to avert the catastrophe which his instincts told him must come at last. By assiduous flattery of Vanessa's conversational talents he frequently prevailed on her to seek the distractions of general society. He kept a sharp lookout for possible admirers. When one appeared, he did his best to bring him and Vanessa together. A certain Dean Winter was the first to offer himself. On his repulse by Vanessa he was succeeded by Dr. Price, afterwards Archbishop of Cashel. But the latter also met with a refusal. In 1717 Vanessa and her sister Mary, who suffered from a chest complaint, took up their abode on the family estate of Marley Abbey, near Celbridge. The river Liffey flowed through the grounds which were rich in yew-trees

¹ For the later relations between Swift and Stella see next chapter.

and laurels ; and on the river bank was a secluded arbour, with steps leading down to the water's edge, where one can fancy Vanessa spent many hours in meditation on her unrequited love.

Some of her occasional poems at this time indicate at once the distress of her spirits and the tenderness of her emotion. The best of them is the following short "Ode to Spring" :

"Hail, blushing goddess, beauteous Spring,
Who in thy jocund train dost bring
Loves and Graces, smiling hours,
Balmy breezes, fragrant flowers,
Come, with tints of roseate hue,
Nature's faded charms renew.
Yet why should I thy presence hail ?
To me no more the breathing gale
Comes fraught with sweets, no more the rose
With such transcendent beauty blows,
As when Cadenus blest the scene,
And shared with me those joys serene.
When, unperceived, the lambent fire
Of Friendship kindled new desire ;
Still listening to his tuneful tongue,
The truths which angels might have sung,
Divine imprest their gentle sway,
And sweetly stole my soul away.
My guide, instructor, lover, friend,
(Dear names !) in one idea blend ;
O ! still conjoin'd, your incense rise,
And waft sweet odours to the skies."

By the year 1720 Vanessa's letters grow piteous. "Tell me sincerely," she writes on one occasion, "if you have once wished with earnestness to see me since I wrote to you ; no, so far from that, you have not once pitied me, though I told you how I was distressed. Solitude is insupportable to a mind which is not easy. I have worn

out my days in sighing, and my nights with watching, and thinking of —, who thinks not of me. How many letters shall I send you before I receive an answer? Can you deny me, in my misery, the only comfort which I can expect at present? O! that I could hope to see you here, or that I could go to you. I was born with violent passions which terminate all in one, that inexpressible passion I have for you. Consider the killing emotions which I feel from your neglect of me, and show some tenderness for me, or I shall lose my senses. Sure you cannot possibly be so much taken up but you might command a moment to write to me, and force your inclinations to so great a charity. I firmly believe, if I could know your thoughts (which no human creature is capable of guessing at, because never any one living thought like you), I should find you had often in a rage wished me religious, hoping then I should have paid my devotions to Heaven; but that would not spare you, for were I an enthusiast, still you would be the deity I should worship. What marks are there of a deity but what you are known by? You are present everywhere: your dear image is always before my eyes. Sometimes you strike me with that prodigious awe, I tremble with fear; at other times a charming compassion shines through your countenance, which revives my soul. Is it not more reasonable to adore a radiant form one has seen than one only described?"

Swift was aghast at the misery which his fatal irresolution had provoked. But even now he still refused an explanation. All her pleadings could draw nothing from him save a commonplace excuse, or an unmeaning protestation. He was busily engaged with official work; he was travelling about the country; scandal would arise if he visited Celbridge often; there was no one on earth whom he adored so much as Vanessa; he had been sitting the other night

with "half a score of both sexes for an hour, and grew as weary as a dog." They had bored him to the death with their sapient talk about society, the state of the kingdom, the South Sea Bubble; he would a thousand times rather have sat with Vanessa and hear her talk unreason for two hours!

In 1720 Mary Vanhomrigh died, and the unhappy Vanessa was left quite alone. She clung to her idol more closely than ever. Swift was at his wits' end. What crime had he committed that this undesired and wearisome adoration should be thrust upon him? He adopted a tone of cynical worldliness, the wisdom of which he tried hard to impress upon Vanessa. Humbler men would have seen the worthlessness of such an expedient. But, with all his insight into human character, Swift was incapable of anything but blind contempt for the refinement of feminine affection.

His letters to Vanessa at this time resemble those which a London *flâneur*, on a visit to the seaside, might write to his friends at the club. Take, for instance, the following:

"CLOGHER, *June 1, 1722.*

"The weather has been so constantly bad that I have wanted all the healthy advantages of the country, and it seems to continue so. It would have been infinitely better once a week to have met at Kendal, and so forth, where one might pass three or four hours in drinking coffee in the morning, or dining *tête-à-tête*, drinking coffee again till seven. . . . Remember that riches are nine parts in ten of all that is good in life, and health is the tenth; drinking coffee comes long after, and yet it is the eleventh; but without the other two former you cannot drink it right."

Or this, written from Loughgall, in the County of Armagh, July 13, 1722 :

" . . . I doubt the bad weather has hindered you much from the diversions of your country house, and put you upon thinking in your chamber. The use I have made of it was to read I know not how many diverting books of history and travels. I wish you would get yourself a horse, and have always two servants to attend you, and visit your neighbours ; the worse the better : there is a pleasure in being revered, and that is always in your power, by your superiority of sense, and an easy fortune."

Or this, written on August 7th, following :

" How do you wear away the time ? Is it among the groves and fields of your country seat, or among your cousins in town, or thinking in a train that will be sure to vex you, and then reaping and forming teasing conclusions from mistaken thoughts ? The best companion for you is a philosopher, whom you would regard as much as a sermon. I have read more trash since I left you than would fill all your shelves, and am abundantly the better for it, though I scarcely remember a syllable. What a foolish thing is time, and how foolish is man, who would be as angry if time stopped as if it passed. . . ."¹

One wearies oneself over the history of Vanessa's passion — so hopeless and yet so enduring. By the beginning of the year 1723 she had grown desperate. Her health was failing, and a final decision as to her fate must be obtained at all cost. She had long been aware of the close intimacy existing between Swift and Stella. Could it be that he preferred the latter to herself ? ¹To solve the doubt, she sacrificed her pride, and wrote a letter to Swift demanding a clear

¹ There is some uncertainty about the dates of these letters. I have adopted those generally approved.

statement of his final intentions. The latter acted with the fury into which an irresolute man always falls when he at last finds himself face to face with stern necessity. He took Vanessa's letter, and rode off with it to Marley Abbey. Striding into the lady's apartment, he flung her letter on the table, and departed without a word. We know from Vanessa herself that Swift's countenance was pre-eminently fitted to express the emotion of infuriated rage.¹ No words were needed now to tell her that henceforth all was over between them.

The shock of this last interview aggravated the ill-health under which Vanessa had long been sinking. She grew rapidly worse, and in the May of 1723 she passed away. Before her death she revoked a will she had made in Swift's favour. Posterity will forgive her this little piece of human vindictiveness. She loved much.¹

For some years previous to the death of Vanessa the condition of Ireland had begun to attract Swift's earnest attention. The northern province of Ulster exhibited some harmony both of racial and religious feeling; and it enjoyed a vigorous industrial life. In the other three provinces of the island a landed aristocracy, English in descent and Protestant in creed, ruled over an Irish and Catholic peasantry. The latter were in the most miserable of all conditions—that of serfs without land. Absence of trade or manufacture drove a teeming population to the soil, the rent of which

¹ The correspondence between Swift and Vanessa, found in the latter's possession, was destroyed by her executors, Bishop Berkeley and Judge Marshall. The latter, however, had taken a careful copy from which Sir Walter Scott's publication was made in his edition of Swift's works. The poem of "Cadenus and Vanessa," much to Swift's annoyance, was published soon after Vanessa's death. We know little of Vanessa's personal appearance beyond that, unlike Stella, she was fair, with light hair and eyes.

was consequently pushed to an enormous and unnatural height. As a matter of fact, rents promised were rarely paid—in many cases they could not be paid—and the Irish cultivator, never out of debt, remained bound to the soil, the whole produce of which, save a bare subsistence, went to the landlord. The established Anglican Church, which exacted its tithes from all, irrespective of creed, represented the minority of a minority. . Seven-eighths of the population of Ireland were Catholics ; and of the Protestants no less than two-thirds were Non-conformists. The latter suffered from social obloquy and petty disabilities. But the Irish Catholic was to all intents and purposes devoid of all civil and political rights. He could not enter the legislature. He was excluded from corporations.¹ He could not be a solicitor. He could hold no civil or military office. He could not sit on a grand jury. He was forbidden to keep arms or ride a horse worth more than five pounds. If he were a landowner, his children, by turning Protestant, could at once obtain a share of his property. Catholic education was prohibited under heavy penalties ; even the sending of a Catholic child to a Continental seminary entailed the confiscation of the delinquent's whole property, real and personal. The celebration of Catholic worship was still allowed. But in 1704 all Catholic priests then in Ireland were carefully registered. The presence of Catholic bishops was forbidden, and, granted that the law were executed, the Catholic clergy must eventually die out. Meantime the harrying down of "unregistered" priests formed a prominent duty of the local magistracy.

The relations between the dominant and subject class

¹ In 1727 the Catholics were deprived of the right of voting at parliamentary or municipal elections.

in Ireland resembled those known in no civilised country. By the Protestant landowner his Catholic fellow-countrymen were spoken of sometimes as "the natives," more generally as "the common enemy." Their poverty, their squalor, their rags excited the astonishment of men who had seen the misery of the French or German serf. In many cases, it is true, a semi-feudal attachment existed between the peasant and his lord. The latter, genial, hospitable, reckless, was too good-natured to be deliberately oppressive. But he had been brought up to regard himself as absolute master over his tenants; he was hard pressed for means to supply the extravagances of an aimless life; and if he forbore to use his powers to the full it was due to good nature only. Whatever the faults of the Irish resident landowner, he was blameless in comparison with his absentee brother. In Swift's time it was computed that a third of the rental of Ireland was carried out of the country. The estates of absentees meanwhile were either rack-rented by a steward, or leased out to middlemen, who sublet them, so as to get the highest possible profit for themselves.

But the dominant class, closely as it was protected by statute and convention, was very far from being without grievances of its own. They could be summed up in three words—dependence upon England. No bill could be passed by the Irish Parliament unless previously approved of by the English privy council. The English parliament, on the other hand, could pass any act it chose to bind that of Ireland without taking the opinion of the sister legislature. Under these restrictions the Irish parliament was reduced to a mockery. Its chief, it might be said its only, work was to vote supplies to the Crown, after which it was usually prorogued by the viceroy till again wanted for that purpose.

What, then, was the conduct of England towards her colony in Ireland? Worse, it must be stated, than that of the colony towards the native Irish. Colonies at that time were regarded as farms cultivated simply and solely for the benefit of the mother country; and Ireland, inasmuch as her proximity made her more dangerous than other colonies, required the most jealous repression. This showed itself in the restrictions placed by England upon Irish trade.

In 1663, in answer to the complaints of the English landowners, the importation of Irish cattle into England was absolutely prohibited. In the same year Ireland was excluded from the English Navigation Act, which meant that no Irish-built ship was in future to have the privilege of trading with any English colony. In 1696 a law was passed, forbidding any colonial produce to be imported into Ireland otherwise than through an English port and after payment of the English customs duty.

The crowning iniquity came in 1699. Debarred from the breeding of cattle, the Irish had turned their attention to sheep. A rich trade was soon opened in the production and exportation of wool. But the alarm of the English wool growers was now aroused; and in 1699 the English parliament prohibited the export of Irish wool, either raw or manufactured, to any foreign country, and to any English port save Milford, Chester, Liverpool, and a few places in the Bristol Channel. The effect of this measure on Irish prosperity was appalling. The most important branch of industry was destroyed at a blow. Of those engaged in it, many thousands left the country; the rest rushed to increase the already frightful competition for the land. But the moral of the Act was worse than its immediate result. The Irish now learnt that the success of any industry in which

they might engage would be the signal for its destruction. Energy was useless ; apathy and despair reigned supreme over every element of Irish life.

Not content with the suppression of Irish industry in the name of English manufacturers, the English Government next exploited the Irish administration for the benefit of English place-hunters. Every available office in Ireland was appropriated to men of English birth. Many of these officials were non-resident ; they drew their salaries and spent them in England. Lastly, came the scandalous misuse of the Irish pension list. Upon this unfortunate fund was quartered every creature, who, while possessing some political interest, was too insignificant or too infamous for English bounty.

How did the Irish parliament endure the outrages inflicted on it by England ? The answer is to be found in the fact that the latter had at its command two great engines, fear and corruption. If the English Protestants in Ireland murmured at their dependence, England could always threaten to abandon them to the vengeance of their Irish and Catholic neighbours. If a dangerous opposition was formed in the Dublin parliament, England broke it up by offers of pensions, titles, or places. An actual majority of the seats were in the hands of a few great Protestant landowners, so there was no difficulty in arranging the bargain. The expense might be heavy, but as the Irish exchequer bore the burden this mattered little to an English ministry. The very intensity of the evil, however, created reformers ; and even before Swift's appearance on the scene, a small but resolute band of men had arisen whose demands included abolition of the restraints on Irish trade, and modification of the bonds which fettered Irish legislation.

It was this party that Swift decided to join in 1720. It would be difficult to say how far his sympathy with them was real. It may be that Swift, now that his lot was cast in Ireland, found that the best policy was to join that party who aimed at making Ireland a prosperous and respected country. The English Government, moreover, to whose interference the degradation of Ireland was really due, was a Whig Government. By joining the Irish parliamentary opposition Swift was thus again able to take the field against the hated faction which had balked his ambition, and driven him from public life. But Ireland at this time consisted really of two nations; and the men with whom Swift threw in his lot had no ideas of benefiting any save the Protestant minority. In what sense, then, have Swift's views on Ireland an original and enduring value? In the sense that he goes beyond the demands of the dominant faction and calls attention to the dangerous misery of the Irish lower classes.

Swift was the first to point out that, even were the question of dependence on England settled, the real difficulties of the Protestant minority would be just begun. A few extracts taken at random from his minor Irish pamphlets will illustrate this feeling:

"Whoever travels this country, and observes the face of nature, or the faces and habits and dwellings of the natives, will hardly think himself in a land where law, religion, or common humanity is professed."

"Farms are screwed up to a rack-rent—leases granted but for a small term of years—the tenants tied down to hard conditions, and discouraged from cultivating the lands they occupy to the best advantage, by the certainty they have of the rent being raised on the expiration of their lease proportionally to the improvements they shall make."

"I confess myself to be touched with a very sensible pleasure when I hear of a mortality in any country parish or village, where the wretches are forced to pay for a filthy cabin and two ridges of potatoes treble their worth—brought up to steal or beg, for want of work—to whom death would be the best thing to be wished for on account both of themselves and the public." And he points out to the landlords that "good, firm, penal laws for improvement, with a tolerably easy rent, and a reasonable period of time, would in twenty years have increased the rents of Ireland at least a third part of the intrinsic value."

On absentee-ism he is especially severe. "Another cause of the decay of trade, scarcity of money, and swelling of exchange is the unnatural affectation of our gentry to reside in and about London. Their rents are remitted to them, and spent there. The countryman wants employment from them; the country shopkeeper wants their custom. For this reason he can't pay his Dublin correspondent readily nor take off a great quantity of his wares. Therefore the Dublin merchant cannot employ the artisan, nor keep up his credit in foreign markets. I have discoursed with some of these gentlemen, persons esteemed for good sense, and demanded a reason for this their so unaccountable proceeding—expensive to them for the present, ruinous to their country, and destructive to the future value of their estates—and find all their answers summed up under three heads—curiosity, pleasure, and loyalty to King George. The two first excuses deserve no answer; let us try the validity of the third. Would not loyalty be much better expressed by gentlemen staying in their respective countries, influencing their dependents by their examples, saving their own wealth, and letting their

neighbours profit by their necessary expenses, thereby keeping them from misery and its unavoidable consequence, discontent? . . . I have heard great divines affirm," he concludes, "that nothing is so likely to call down a universal judgment from heaven upon a nation as universal oppression; and whether this be not already verified in part, their worships, the landlords, are now at full leisure to consider."

Swift's first action on behalf of Ireland was in 1720. In that year he published his "Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures." He pointed out that, since it was at present hopeless to expect England to abandon her policy of commercial injustice, Ireland must retaliate. Let no Irish man or woman wear or use any article that had not been produced in Ireland. "Upon the whole, and to crown all the rest, let a firm resolution be taken, by male and female, never to appear with one single shred that comes from England." All English imports, in fact, should be burnt except the people and the coals, and a lady who wore even a single English stay-lace should be denounced as a traitress. This humble protest against a system, on behalf of which no plea could be urged, excited the utmost fury of the English Government. At a hint from the castle, the Irish Chief Justice, Whitshed, hurried on a prosecution against the printer. But in spite of the threats of the judge the jury refused to find a verdict, and as a dangerous murmur began to arise, the Government found themselves compelled to stop proceedings.

Another and far more important question now arose. In the year 1722 Irish industry became much inconvenienced by a deficiency of copper coin. No mint was allowed in Ireland by the English Government; when money was wanted, the latter used to grant patents to private persons authorising them to coin the required

sums. It was impossible for the English ministry to lose so excellent an opportunity for a job. After a short delay the privilege was granted to a certain Birmingham iron-master named William Wood, whose recommendation consisted of a bribe of £10,000 paid to the Duchess of Kendal, the king's mistress. The copper money to be coined was to be equal in nominal value to £108,000. Each pound avoirdupois of copper, worth 12d. bullion price, was to be turned into farthings and halfpence valuing half-a-crown.

From the financial point of view there was much to be said against the arrangement. The low intrinsic value of the coins mattered little. Copper coins being only legal tender up to 5½d., they were merely counters, and the only qualities they required were durability and distinctness. The total amount to be coined was, however, preposterous. The whole circulating medium of Ireland at this time was only about £400,000, and the utmost amount of copper conceivably required was calculated at only £15,000 worth. To flood the country with copper to the enormous extent the Government proposed would, it was maintained, produce serious evils. Bad money always drives out good, and the new copper would tend to expel from Ireland the scanty store of gold and silver. The foreign exchanges would be turned against the country, and Irish commerce would eventually suffer a disastrous blow.

But it was not the financial but the political aspect of the scheme which roused popular indignation. Ireland had long been murmuring against her ignominious treatment by England; and the only answer vouchsafed was to impose a new coinage on her, not after consultation with the Irish parliament or any other Irish corporation, but simply and solely by private arrangement between an English

minister, an English king's mistress, and an unknown Birmingham iron-master ! A financial question appealed to the whole country irrespective of blood or creed, and a universal agitation against "Wood's halfpence" immediately arose. This had been in progress for some time when Swift, early in 1724, resolved to come forward on the popular side. Assuming the character of "M. B.," a Dublin draper or "drapier," as he chose to write the word, and employing a simple, popular style, he attacked the scheme in a series of virulent pamphlets. They are usually known as the "Drapier's Letters," and the following extracts will give some idea of their style and argument.

As might have been expected in a dispute with Swift, the unhappy William Wood comes in for much personal abuse. "But, since I have gone so far as to mention particular persons, it may be some satisfaction to know who is this Wood himself, that has the honour to have a whole kingdom at his mercy for almost two years together. I find that he is in the patent entitled esquire, although he were understood to be only a hardwareman, and so I have been bold to call him in my former letters : however, a squire he is, not only by virtue of his patent, but by having been a collector in Shropshire ; where, pretending to have been robbed, and suing the county, he was cast, and, for the infamy of the fact, lost his employment.

"I have heard another story of this Squire Wood from a very honourable lady that one Hamilton told her. Hamilton was sent for, six years ago, by Sir Isaac Newton, to try the coinage of four men, who then solicited a patent for coining halfpence for Ireland ; their names were Wood, Costor, Eliston, and Parker. Parker made the fairest offer, and Wood the worst, for his coin were three halfpence in a pound weight less value than

the other. By which it is plain with what intentions he solicited his patent, but not so plain how he obtained it.”¹

The last sentence pointed at the Duchess of Kendal. It would have been dangerous to refer to her by name; the court would have at once cried out that the Drapier was a Jacobite.

Wood being such a scoundrel, the connection between him and the present dearth of halfpence, which forms the excuse for the patent, is obvious. “Wood by his emissaries—enemies to God and this kingdom—has taken care to buy up as many of our old halfpence as he could, and from thence the present want of change arises; to remove which by Mr. Wood’s remedy would be to cure a scratch on the finger by cutting off the arm.”

Any stick will do to beat a dog with, and Swift in his zeal against the new coinage treats as gospel the most outrageous financial fallacies. We will not do him the injustice of supposing that he believed them himself.

Wood’s halfpence were to be legal tender only up to 5½d. Swift at once assumes that everybody will now pay for their goods in successive sums of 5½d. The difference between the mint and the bullion price of the copper is 150 per cent. Therefore every person who receives a payment will suffer loss to this amount. Somewhat strangely, every person who *makes* a payment will suffer an equal loss! Swift then goes on to describe the frightful state of things to be expected as soon as the debased copper has driven out all the gold.

“The common weight of these halfpence is between four and five to an ounce—suppose five; then 3s. 4d. will weigh a pound, and consequently 20s. will weigh six pounds butter weight. Now there are many hundred farmers who pay £200 a year rent; therefore, when one

¹ Drapier’s Letter III.

of these farmers comes with his half-year's rent, which is £100, it will be at least six hundred pounds weight, which is three horses' load. If a 'squire has a mind to come to town to buy clothes, and wine, and spices for himself and family, or perhaps to pass the winter here, he must bring with him five or six horses well laden with sacks, as the farmers bring their corn, and when his lady comes in her coach to our shops it must be followed by a car loaded with Mr. Wood's money. And I hope we shall have the grace to take it for no more than it is worth. They say 'Squire Conolly (the Speaker) has £16,000 a year; now, if he sends for his rent to town, as it is likely he does, he must have 250 horses to bring up his half-year's rent, and two or three great cellars in his house for stowage. But what the bankers will do I cannot tell, for I am assured that some great bankers keep by them £40,000 in ready cash, to answer all payments; which sum, in Mr. Wood's money, would require 1,200 horses to carry it."¹


Even this, however, is only a foretaste of what will happen. The Government acknowledge that the new copper coinage has a very low intrinsic value. But, so great is Wood's villainy, even the Government has been deceived.

"Your newsletter says that an assay was made of the coin. How impudent and insupportable is this! Wood takes care to coin a dozen or two halfpence of good metal, sends them to the Tower, and they are approved, and these must answer all that he has already coined or shall coin for the future. It is true, indeed, that a gentleman often sends to my shop for a pattern of stuff; I cut it fairly off, and, if he likes it, he comes, or sends, and compares the pattern with the whole piece, and probably we come to a bargain. But if I were to buy a hundred

¹ Drapier's Letter I.

sheep and the grazier should bring me one single wether, fat and well fleeced, by way of pattern, and expect the same price round for the whole hundred, without suffering me to see them before he was paid, or giving me good security to restore my money for those that were lean, or shorn, or scabby, I would be none of his customer. I have heard of a man who had a mind to sell his house, and therefore carried a piece of brick in his pocket, which he showed as a pattern to encourage purchasers; and this is directly the case in point with Mr. Wood's assay."¹

Swift's financial exaggerations, though well fitted to delude an unlettered populace, could have hardly withstood serious investigation. He was on safer ground when he denounced the cynical indifference shown by England to Irish sentiment in this affair. Wood himself had actually published a statement in the newspapers deriding the alarm expressed by the Irish parliament. Swift seizes on this impudent declaration with avidity. "Observe this little impudent hardwareman turning into ridicule the direful apprehensions of a whole kingdom, priding himself as the cause of them, and daring to prescribe (what no king of England ever attempted) how far a whole nation shall be obliged to take his brass coin. And he has reason to insult; for sure there was never an example in history of a great kingdom kept in awe for above a year, in daily dread of utter destruction—not by a powerful invader at the head of 20,000 men—not by a plague or a famine—not by a tyrannical prince (for we never had one more gracious) or a corrupt administration—but by one single, diminutive, insignificant mechanic. . . . It is no loss of honour to submit to the lion, but who with the figure of a man can think with patience of being devoured alive by a rat?"²

¹ Drapier's Letter II.² Ibid.

On the insult involved by the refusal to cancel the patent in answer to Ireland's demand Swift lays great stress. "Put the case, that the two Houses of Lords and Commons of England, and the privy council there, should address his Majesty to recall a patent from whence they apprehend the most ruinous consequences to the whole kingdom; and, to make it stronger if possible, that the whole nation, almost to a man, should thereupon discover 'the most dismal apprehensions,' as Mr. Wood styles them; would his Majesty debate half an hour what he had to do? Would any minister dare to advise him against recalling such a patent? Or would the matter be referred to the privy council or to Westminster Hall, the two Houses of Parliament plaintiffs and William Wood defendant? And is there even the smallest difference between the two cases?"

"Were not the people of Ireland born as free as those of England? How have they forfeited their freedom? Is not their parliament as fair a representative of the people as that of England? And has not their privy council as great or a greater share in the administration of public affairs? Are not they subjects of the same king? Does not the same sun shine upon them? And have they not the same God for their protector? Am I a freeman in England, and do I become a slave in six hours by crossing the Channel?"¹

". . . It is true indeed that within the memory of man the parliaments of England have sometimes assumed the power of binding this kingdom by laws enacted there; wherein they were at first openly opposed (as far as truth, reason, and justice are capable of opposing) by the famous Mr. Molyneux,² an English gentleman born here, as well

¹ Drapier's Letter III.

² Mr. Molyneux, in "The case of Ireland being bound by Acts of Parliament in England stated," had maintained that the Irish Parliament possessed an immemorial right to freedom of legislation,

as by several of the greatest patriots and best Whigs in England; but the love and torrent of power prevailed. Indeed the arguments on both sides were invincible. For in reason, all government without the consent of the governed is the very definition of slavery; but in fact, eleven men well armed will certainly subdue one single man in his shirt. But I have done; for those who have used power to cramp liberty, have gone so far as to resent even the liberty of complaining, although a man upon the rack was never known to be refused the liberty of roaring as loud as he thought fit.”¹

The last few paragraphs were little less than a demand for the parliamentary independence of Ireland. The boldest, however, could hardly expect so much for many years to come. For the present the enemy was Wood’s halfpence. As the best weapon against them Swift recommends what I believe is the first instance of “boycotting” in Irish history.

“When the evil day is come (if it must come) let us mark and observe those who presume to offer these halfpence in payment. Let their names and trades and places of abode be made public, that every one may be aware of them as betrayers of their country and confederates with Mr. Wood. Let them be watched at markets and fairs, and let the first honest discoverer give the word that Mr. Wood’s halfpence have been offered and caution the poor innocent people not to receive them.”

The ensuing passage stands apart as an instance of Swift’s humour. Wood was declared to have threatened to make the Irish “swallow his coin in fireballs.” In order to make fun of Wood Swift seizes on this statement and actually treats it as a serious proposal.

“As to ‘swallowing these halfpence in fireballs’ it is

¹ Drapier’s Letter IV.

a story equally improbable. For to execute this operation, the whole stock of Mr. Wood's coin and metal must be melted down and moulded into hollow balls with wild-fire, no bigger than a reasonable throat may be able to swallow. Now, the metal he has prepared, and already coined, will amount to at least fifty millions of halfpence, to be swallowed by a million and a half of people; so that, allowing two halfpence to each ball, there will be about seventeen balls of wildfire apiece to be swallowed by every person in the kingdom; and to administer this dose there cannot be conveniently fewer than fifty thousand operators, allowing one operator to every thirty, which, considering the squeamishness of some stomachs and the peevishness of young children, is but reasonable. Now, under correction of better judgments, I think the trouble and charge of such an experiment would exceed the profit."¹

In conclusion, the following is interesting as giving Swift's explanation of the method he chose in attacking Wood; it is one of the very few instances in which Swift quotes Scripture:

"I was in the case of David, who could not move in the armour of Saul, and therefore I rather chose to attack this uncircumcised Philistine (Wood, I mean) with a sling and a stone. And I may say, for Wood's honour as well as my own, that he resembles Goliath in many circumstances very applicable to the present purpose, for Goliath had 'a helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass; and he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders.' In short, he was like Mr. Wood, all over brass, and he defied the armies of the living God. Goliath's conditions of combat were likewise

¹ Drapier's Letter IV.

the same with those of Wood: 'if he prevail against us, then shall we be his servants.' But if it happens that I prevail over him, I renounce the other part of the condition; 'he shall never be a servant of mine, for I do not think him fit to be trusted in any honest man's shop.'"¹

The history of Wood's halfpence can soon be told. A Committee of Inquiry opened in answer to Irish demands in April, 1724, recommended a reduction of the proposed coinage to £40,000. But Swift's first Drapier's Letter, published before the committee's report was issued, had inflamed the people to madness. The second and third letters followed in August. The fourth letter, addressed "to the whole people of Ireland," appeared in October. A stirring summons to national independence, the sensation it aroused was extraordinary. The Government at last felt bound to take action. Harding, the Drapier's printer, was arrested, and a reward of £300 offered for the apprehension of the Drapier himself. But England saw that conciliation was needed besides force. They recalled the actual lord lieutenant, the Duke of Grafton, a man of dull manners and no ability, and sent over in his place the brilliant and versatile Lord Carteret. The latter was an old friend of Swift's, and had no wish to embitter public feeling. In addition to this, though Swift's authorship was universally known, any informer against him would have been in peril of his life. It was resolved, however, to press the charge against Harding. On November 11th his cause came on before Chief Justice Whitshed. The grand jury threw out the bill. They were dismissed after a furious denunciation from the judgment-seat. Another grand jury was summoned. Again the judge threatened, expostulated, and reviled. Their only reply was to present Wood's halfpence as a

¹ Drapier's Letter IV.

common nuisance. Beaten at last, the English Government gave up the struggle. Wood's patent was cancelled, a pension of £3,000 a year for eight years being given to him in compensation for the great expense and trouble he had undergone.

Swift's triumph was complete. He had taught Ireland for the first time in her history to substitute constitutional agitation for the old system of rebellion, and he had made her first effort in this new field a brilliant success. He had given the Irish parliamentary party the watchword, "Free trade and legislative independence." Alone among Irish leaders he had united every class in Ireland, Churchman, Catholic, and Dissenter into an irresistible phalanx. On his arrival in Dublin in 1714 he had been the most unpopular man in the city; he was now its idol.

All this might well have been a source of pride. But we should err greatly in regarding Swift as satisfied by his triumph. Disappointed ambition and personal pique had set too deep a mark on his moody spirit. Even now he looked on Ireland as a land of exile.¹ In the organised schemes of its would-be liberators he refused to share. He had shown the power of his genius; he had defeated that Whig aristocracy which ten years before had so exulted in his downfall. For the rest he cared not. He well knew the emptiness of popular favour. One will again find him denouncing the iniquities of Irish misgovernment; but it is not as the patriot who suffers with his country, but as the misanthrope who finds in the vice and folly of his fellow-creatures fit food for the ravenous appetite of his rage. The success of the *Drapier* arrested not the despondent bitterness which now begins to grow upon him more strongly year by year.

¹ In 1727 Swift wrote :

"Remove me from this land of slaves,
Where all are fools and all are knaves."

CHAPTER VIII.

"GULLIVER'S TRAVELS."

Story of a marriage between Swift and Stella—This not the case—Evidence—No definite intention on Swift's part ever to marry—Reasons—His relations to Stella never more than those of a friend—Stella at the deanery—With Swift at Quilca—Experiences there—Swift's birthday odes to Stella—Her want of sentiment—This admired by Swift—Witticisms of Stella—Visit of Swift to England in 1726—Illness of Stella—Swift's letters thereon—He returns to Dublin—Publication of "Gulliver's Travels"—Plan of the work—Extracts—Swift's opinion of princes, prime ministers, the House of Commons, the peerage—Denunciation of war—Of lawyers—Of English public life—Swift's ideal simplicity—His theories of education and marriage—Passage on lying—The people who never die—"Gulliver's Travels" a general anathema—Swift's last visit to England in 1727—Death of George I. does not aid the Tories—Renewed illness of Stella—Swift's unhappiness—He returns to Dublin—Death of Stella—Swift's comments thereon.

It has been shown, in the preceding chapter, that between the connection with Stella and the connection with Vanessa there was a difference in kind. In spite, therefore, of their external similarity, it has seemed best to treat these two passages in Swift's life entirely apart.

There is a fixed tradition with the average type of English novelist, that his task remains undone till the hero of his fancy finds a resting place in the joys of a conventionally loving wife. This theory has extended its

dominion beyond the realm of fiction; and English biographers, even the most unprejudiced, have come to doubt the possibility of a permanent friendship between two persons of opposite sex, unjoined by marriage.

It was probably in obedience to the same feeling that most of Swift's contemporaries insisted so strongly on the marriage between him and Esther Johnson.

Their statements have been regarded as authoritative by later writers,¹ and therefore need a brief recapitulation.

Lord Orrery, in his "Remarks upon the Life and Writings of Dr. Jonathan Swift," published in 1751, says "Stella was the concealed but undoubted wife of Dr. Swift, and if my informations are right, she was married to him in the year 1716 by Dr. Ashe, then Bishop of Clogher." Whence these "informations" came, Orrery does not state. Dr. Delany, in his "Observations upon Lord Orrery's Remarks," published three years later, merely expresses his agreement with Orrery's bare assertion. Mr. Deane Swift, in his "Essay on the Life and Writings of Dr. Jonathan Swift," written in 1756, is equally vague; and the various statements on the subject made by the younger Sheridan in his "Life of Swift" are so crowded with palpable inaccuracies as to be entirely inconclusive. Dr. Johnson was told by a certain Samuel Madden that, soon after his forty-ninth year, Swift was married to Stella by Dr. Ashe. The ceremony, said Madden, took place at Dublin, in the deanery

¹ Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Craik, in their Lives of Swift, uphold the marriage. For the opposite view see Monck Mason and an article on "Dean Swift in Ireland," *Quarterly Review*, vol. 156. Mr. Leslie Stephen, in his monograph on Swift, in the English Men of Letters Series, commits himself to neither side. The late Mr. Forster, in vol. i. of his unfinished Life of Swift, expresses strong disbelief in the marriage.

garden. Madden was a man of erratic character, and there is no evidence that he ever met Swift or any of his circle. He, therefore, merely repeats the current rumour of his time, with the addition of a little picturesque detail. Mr. Monck Berkeley, on page xxxvi. of his "Literary Relics," published in 1789, is more definite. According to him, Swift and Esther Johnson were married in 1716, by the Bishop of Clogher, "who himself," says the annalist, "related the circumstance to Bishop Berkeley, by whose relict the story was communicated to me." Bishop Berkeley was in Italy at the date of the supposed marriage, and remained there till 1721. The Bishop of Clogher died in 1717, without having left Ireland since the same date. The news must therefore have been communicated to his friend by letter. But till this letter is produced, Monck Berkeley's statement made on third-hand information, seventy-three years after the event, goes for nothing.

X The whole evidence for the marriage may be thus summed up in a vague rumour, utterly unsupported by documentary evidence.

What, then, is the presumption against the marriage?

In the first place, there is no extant record on the point by the three persons mostly concerned—Dr. Ashe, Swift, and Esther Johnson. In the numerous communications that passed between Swift and Stella subsequent to 1716, they write to one another as ordinary friends. This may be so, say the upholders of the marriage; but it had taken place on the understanding that it should be kept secret, and that no cohabitation should ensue. Swift's most marked characteristic was an openness that verged on brutality. Is it likely that from 1716 to 1728, the date of Stella's death, he could have kept up so elaborate and organised a scheme of hypocrisy? The quality he

most admired in his friends was honesty. Would he have forced that dearest friend of all to describe herself in her last will and testament as a single woman, when this was not the case? But even in his most secret records, where there was no motive for concealment, records which only accident has preserved, the Journal written at Holyhead in 1727, and the Memoir and other notices composed after Stella's death, he never speaks of Esther Johnson save as his "dearest friend." It is the same with private letters written hurriedly to friends when Stella's death was hourly expected. No word is used which could be possibly construed into a reference to marriage. More than this, the one person whose testimony is most important of all, Mrs. Dingley, Stella's companion and confidante, to whom even the Journal to Stella and all similar communications were submitted, always denied the story of the marriage. Yet it was largely to her friend's interest that the fact of a marriage should be established. Mrs. Brent, the dean's housekeeper in 1716, was equally positive against it. Lastly, we have the great authority of Dr. John Lyon. He was Swift's personal attendant during his declining years, managed his private affairs, and took charge of all his papers. Yet after going carefully into all the possible evidence, written and oral, on the subject, he came to the conclusion that there was no foundation for the marriage but "hearsay authority, and that very ill founded."

In my opinion, not only did no marriage ever take place between Swift and Stella, but none was ever contemplated. Up to his forty-seventh year Swift's income was very small; and his contempt for the traditional married clergyman with a large family is too well known to need illustration. Besides financial considerations, it must be remembered that to the purely physical side of marriage Swift had a most intense aversion. Even in youth his

temperament was extremely cold. Though intensely fond of female society, he valued his fair acquaintances for their mental rather than their physical charms. In manhood his constitution was undermined by frequent attacks of ill-health. There is, in fact, much to support the contention that even before his appointment to the deanery of St. Patrick's, celibacy had become a matter of necessity.¹ The closeness of the bond between Swift and Stella is well exhibited by Swift's language in the *Journal* written from London during the years 1710-1713. I, however, believe that, even then, he looked upon their relation as one of friendship only. It is characteristic of Swift's indifference to ordinary sentiment that he should have sought and obtained a girl's love, without any fixed intention of offering her the usual return. Whether he is to be blamed, is a point on which the reader may form his own opinion. The biographer's duty is to explain conduct, not to judge it.

The old terms between Swift and Stella were renewed as closely as ever after Swift's return to Dublin in August, 1714. In their intercourse he took especial pains to observe the proprieties. Mrs. Brent, the dean's housekeeper, subsequently told Hawkesworth that "Mrs. Johnson never came alone to the deanery, that Mrs. Dingley and she always came together, and that she never slept in that house if the dean was there, only in time of his sickness, to attend him, and see him well taken care of; and during this course of her generous attendance Mrs. Dingley and she slept together, and, as soon as he recovered, they returned to their lodgings in Ormond's Quay." During the dean's absence from Dublin, Stella and Mrs. Dingley usually resided at the deanery to take charge of the

¹ There is a very sensible discussion of this question in Sir Walter Scott's *Life of Swift*, pp. 216-220. (Edition of 1834.)

house. Of Stella herself we have few notices. She always appeared at Swift's dinner parties on Sunday evenings; she met him at the Wednesday receptions, given by Dr. Delany at his house of Delville; and she was a guest with him at the ramshackle country seat of Quilca, belonging to Dr. Thomas Sheridan, a Dublin school-master, careless, witty, and a great friend of Swift's. The great Dean of St. Patrick's did not bear trifling inconveniences like a hero, and there exists an amusing impeachment drawn up by him against "The Blunders, Deficiencies, Distresses, and Misfortunes of Quilca (proposed to contain twenty-one volumes in quarto. Begun April 20, 1724, and to be continued weekly, if due encouragement be given)."

The following extracts will give an example of this formidable indictment :

"The door of the dean's bed-chamber full of large chinks.

"The dean's bed threatening every night to fall under him.

"The passages open overhead, by which the cats pass continually into the cellar and eat the victuals, for which one was tried, condemned, and executed by the sword.

"But one chair in the house fit for sitting on, and that in a very ill state of health.

"The grate in the ladies' (Stella's and Mrs. Dingley's) bed-chamber forced to be removed, by which they were compelled to be without fire, the chimney smoking intolerably, and the dean's great-coat employed to stop the wind from coming down the chimney, without which expedient they must have been frozen to death.

"Not one utensil for a fire, except an old pair of tongs, which travels through the house, and is likewise employed

to take the meat out of the pot for want of a flesh-fork.

"Every servant an arrant thief as to victuals and drink.

April 28th.—"The ladies' and dean's servants growing fast into the thieveries and manners of the natives; the ladies themselves very much corrupted; the dean perpetually storming, and in danger of either losing all his flesh or sinking into barbarity for the sake of peace.

"*Bellum lactæum*, or the milky battle, fought between the dean and the crew of Quilca; the latter insisting on their privilege of not milking till eleven in the forenoon, whereas Mrs. Johnson wanted milk at eight for her health. In this battle the dean got the victory; but the crew of Quilca begin to rebel again, for it is this day almost ten o'clock, and Mrs. Johnson has not got her milk.

"A proverb on the laziness and lodgings of the servants—'The worse their sty—the longer they lie.'"

People who met Stella have recorded their admiration of the beauty which she still retained in spite of advancing years. She had very fine dark eyes, with hair of raven blackness, and a pensive, but not melancholy expression. Regularly on Stella's birthday the dean presented her with a copy of verses.

The following, though pretty, would, one fears, have experienced a dubious reception from a less intimate friend. It is dated for March 13, 1719:

"Stella this day is thirty-four
(We shan't dispute a year or more):
However, Stella, be not troubled
Although thy size and years are doubled
Since first I saw thee at sixteen,
The brightest virgin on the green;

So little is thy form declined ;
 Made up so largely in thy mind.
 O would it please the gods to split
 Thy beauty, years, and size, and wit !

“ No age could furnish out a pair
 Of nymphs so graceful, wise, and fair ;
 With half the lustre of your eyes,
 With half your wit, your years and size.
 And then, before it grew too late,
 How should I beg of gentle fate
 (That either nymph might have her swain)
 To split my worship too in twain.”

The following extract from another poem, written five years later, shows what qualities of Stella Swift chiefly prized :

“ When, among scholars, can we find
 So soft and yet so firm a mind ?
 All accidents of life conspire
 To raise up Stella's virtue higher,
 Or else to introduce the rest
 Which had been latent in her breast.
 Her firmness who could e'er have known,
 Had she not evils of her own ?
 Her kindness who could ever guess,
 Had not her friends been in distress ?
 Whatever base returns you find
 From me, dear Stella, still be kind.
 In your own heart you'll reap the fruit,
 Though I continue still a brute.
 But, when I once am out of pain ¹
 I promise to be good again ;
 Meantime, your other juster friends
 Shall for my follies make amends ;
 So may we long continue thus,
 Admiring you, you pitying us.”

In Swift's fondness for Stella one again remarks his

¹ This poem was written while Swift was very ill.

preference for practical simplicity rather than refined sentiment; for sympathy rather than adoration. That Stella's was a plain, if not a homely nature, is shown by the "good sayings of Stella," of which Swift made a collection. They certainly savour far more of the house-keeper's room than of the *boudoir*.

"A gentleman who had been very silly and pert in her company at last began to grieve at remembering the loss of a child lately dead. A bishop sitting by comforted him—that he should be easy because the child was gone to heaven. 'No, my lord,' said she, 'that is it which most grieves him, because he is sure never to see his child there.'

"A very dirty clergyman of her acquaintance, who affected smartness and repartees, was asked by some of the company how his nails came to be so dirty: he was at a loss, but she solved the difficulty by saying, 'The doctor's nails grew dirty by scratching himself.'

"On one occasion she called to her servants to know what ill smell was in the kitchen; they answered, they were making matches. "Well," said she, "I have heard matches were made in heaven, but by the brimstone one would think they were made in hell."¹

In 1726 Swift resolved to answer the persistent invitations of his friends by a visit to England.

The Whigs under Walpole's leadership still monopolised all power. But the Tories had recovered from their panic of twelve years ago, and, encouraged by the support of the Prince of Wales, were engaged in vigorous opposition. Oxford had died in 1724. Ormond was still in exile. But Bolingbroke, by a judicious bribe to the Duchess of Kendal, had obtained a pardon with leave to

¹ From a paper of Swift's entitled "Bon Mots de Stella."

return to England. His property was restored, though he was not allowed to resume his seat in the House of Lords. Literary enterprise, however, made up for exclusion from the senate; and he was busily endeavouring, as a pamphleteer, to recover the power he had lost as a statesman.

Swift's literary friends were still vigorous and united. Arbuthnot, no longer Court physician, solaced himself by the cultivation of a genial cynicism towards things in general. Gay was being patronised by the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry. Prior, checked in his diplomatic career by the advent of the Whigs to power, had been compensated for his losses by Lord Oxford, and was as cheerful and epigrammatic as of yore. Pope, a beginner when Swift had left London, had made over £8,000 by his translation of the Homeric poems, and was now living in cultured ease at his villa of Twickenham. Even William Congreve, though grievously afflicted with gout and blindness, was still able to enjoy the pleasures of social intercourse.

Swift arrived in England in March, 1726. After staying with Gay in London he paid long visits to Bolingbroke, Pope, and Arbuthnot. Besides advising his friends on their own projects, Swift took their opinion on his own great work, "Gulliver's Travels," the manuscript of which he had brought with him.

He paid his court at Leicester House, the Prince of Wales's residence; and became great friends with pretty Mrs. Howard, afterwards Lady Suffolk, the prince's mistress. The authorities in Ireland had been much alarmed at the redoubtable Drapier's visit to England; and wrote to Walpole suggesting that an eye should be kept on his movements. The minister took the hint, asked Swift to dinner, and graciously granted him a

private interview. It is probable that Walpole would have gladly won over so able a partisan. But Swift, whose adhesion to the Whigs was under any circumstances impossible, only asked redress for the most flagrant Irish grievances. Walpole refused, and the breach between Swift and the Whigs remained unhealed.¹

In the midst of his new interests he was suddenly plunged in alarm by news of Stella's serious ill-health. A letter of his to Dr. Stopford, dated July 20, 1726, shows the distress with which he received the sad intelligence. "As I value life very little," says Swift, "so the poor casual remains of it after such a loss would be a burden, that I must heartily beg God Almighty to enable me to bear; and I think there is not a greater folly than that of entering into too strict and particular a friendship, with the loss of which a man must be absolutely miserable, but especially at an age when it is too late to engage in a new friendship. Besides, this was a person of my own rearing and instructing from my childhood; who excelled in every good quality that can possibly accomplish a human creature. . . . Dear Jim, pardon me, I know not what I am saying; but believe me, that violent friendship is much more lasting than violent love." Luckily Stella rallied. Swift had, however, made up his mind to return to Dublin, and by the 22nd of August he was back at the deanery.

In November, 1726, "*Gulliver's Travels*," the publication of which had been entrusted to Pope's discretion, appeared.²

¹ See for Swift's demands a very interesting letter of his to Lord Peterborough, April 28, 1726.

² Swift obtained £300 by "*Gulliver's Travels*." In spite of his strong business aptitudes, he neither made nor tried to make anything by his other works.

"Gulliver's Travels" had its origin in the idea of a great general satire on human foibles, projected as early as 1714, by the Scriblerus Club. But the extraordinary care spent on the work by Swift, the breadth of its application, and the completeness with which it expresses his peculiar sentiments during the twelve years that followed his settlement at the deanery of St. Patrick's, make it in every way his own.

A full commentary on "Gulliver's Travels" would need a volume to itself. Critics have pointed out the sources from which Swift derived the groundwork of his plan; they have explained the special allusions to contemporary history which abound throughout; and they have expatiated on the extraordinary skill with which the story is told, the exactness of its proportions, the accuracy of its logic, and the verisimilitude of its facts.¹

Considered merely as a story the adventures of Captain Gulliver, somewhat corrected by the necessary blue pencil, have formed the delight of countless children. I propose in the following pages to consider the work from the point of view of its more serious and real intention.

The method of the book is obvious. Change man's conventional view of himself, and how absurd, how fatuous will appear everything in which he has previously taken pride.

In Lilliput the reader is transported to a country

¹ The reader is referred to Scott's "Life of Swift," Appendix V., entitled "Remarks on 'Gulliver's Travels'"; to Taine, "Histoire de la littérature Anglaise," vol. iii. chap. v. part v.; and to an article, "Dean Swift in Ireland," in the *Quarterly Review*, vol. clvi. It is to be feared that "Gulliver's Travels" is far better known as a story than as a satire. A similar fate has befallen Fielding's "Jonathan Wild."

inhabited by pigmies six inches high. Their sovereign, whose dominions extend within a circumference of no less than twelve miles, happens to be taller by the breadth of Captain Gulliver's nail than any of his subjects. He describes himself as "the delight and terror of the universe, whose dominions extend to the extremities of the globe; monarch of all monarchs, taller than the sons of men; whose feet press down to the centre, and whose head strikes against the sun; at whose nod the princes of the earth shake their knees; pleasant as the spring, comfortable as the summer, fruitful as autumn, dreadful as winter." His courtiers are divided into two great opposing factions, the High Heels and the Low Heels. His whole realm is racked by the question of questions: Shall men break their eggs at the big end or at the little end? Then comes the inference: Would not our own assumptions of princely grandeur, our own political parties, and our own religious schisms seem equally trivial if viewed by a superior being?

*Science / Philosophy
center of universe*

*Viewed by a
superior being.*

In Brobdingnag the telescope is reversed. Gulliver is a pigmy among giants. Many cherished illusions are now destroyed through the medium of a magnifying glass. The coarse skins of the Brobdingnagian ladies turn Gulliver sick with horror. Would not our own beauties be equally hideous if seen on a similar scale? Natural operations among the Brobdingnagians are the quintessence of disgust. Is not it really the same with us? But the satire in Brobdingnag soon drops back to the attack on human pettiness. Swift has a love for his genial giants, with their contempt for philosophic quibbles, their hatred of legal subtleties, and their ignorance of political finesse. He delights in the scorn they express for him and his fellows. "After a hearty fit of laughing," says Gulliver, "the King of Brobdingnag

asked me whether I was a Whig or a Tory?" Then, turning to his first minister, who waited behind him with a white staff, near as tall as the mainmast of the *Royal Sovereign*, he observed, "How contemptible a thing was human grandeur, which could be mimicked by such diminutive insects as I! and yet," says he, "I dare engage, these creatures have their titles and distinctions of honour; they contrive little nests and burrows that they call houses and cities; they make a figure in dress and equipage; they love, they fight, they dispute, they cheat, and they betray!"

In Laputa we are confronted with the absurdities of science and philosophy pushed to their extremes. Gulliver finds projectors trying to build houses from the roof downwards; to extract sunbeams from cucumbers; to prevent the growth of wool upon young lambs, "by which it was hoped in a reasonable time to propagate the breed of naked sheep all over the kingdom." Others have a wonderful scheme to simplify conversation by abolishing words. But are these schemes much more foolish than those which rise in the brains of our own pedants? ¹

Swift's satire increases in severity as he goes on. It is mild in Lilliput and Brobdingnag. It grows fiercer in Laputa. In the fourth part of the work, where the horses, Houyhnhnms, are described as rulers, while man, the Yahoo, is in the condition of a beast, the satire reaches to the very summit of indignant scorn. Knowledge and civilisation have been exposed. The elemental instincts of the human being are now shown to be

¹ In justice to Swift it should be remembered that this passage was written shortly after the great financial mania known as the South Sea Bubble. There was a rage for speculation at that time, and schemes for working a wheel for perpetual motion, and for transmuting quicksilver into a fine malleable metal, found ready support.

abominable to the very core. Deprive man of reason, and we find the most detestable of nature's products. Filthier than the sow, more quarrelsome than the tiger, more ravenous than the wolf, more noisome than the polecat, more obscene than the pariah dog, one wonders what possible reason there can be for the creation of so foul a thing. But this is only the introduction. After a view of civilisation, Swift comes to the conclusion that its vices only aggravate man's bad instincts. Human reason, the distinction which separates man from beast, in fact, is only a quality "fitted to increase our natural vices, as the reflection from a troubled stream returns the image of an ill-shapen body, not only larger, but more distorted."¹

Note

X

The following quotations from "Gulliver's Travels" will illustrate the style and ideas of that work.

One may begin with Swift's character of princes. "Three kings protested to me," says Gulliver at Glubb-dubdrib, "that in their whole reigns they never did once prefer any person of merit, unless by mistake, or treachery of some minister in whom they confided; neither would they do it were they to live again;" and they showed with great strength of reason, "That the royal throne could not be supported without corruption, because that positive, confident, restive temper, which virtue infused into a man, was a perpetual clog to public business."

247 From the prince, we pass to the prime minister. "I told him," says Gulliver to his master in Houyhnhn Land, "that a first or chief minister of state, who was the

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¹ The voyage to the Houyhnhnms, forming the fourth and most effective part of "Gulliver's Travels," is not printed, or at any rate much cut down, in the popular editions of "Gulliver." The gross incidents and disgusting details with which it is crowded to an extent rare even for Swift, render it unfit for general reading.

person I intended to describe, was a creature wholly exempt from joy and grief, love and hatred, pity and anger; at least, makes use of no other passions but a violent desire of wealth, power, and titles; that he applies his words to all uses, except to the indication of his mind; that he never tells a truth but with an intent that you should take it for a lie; nor a lie, but with a design that you should take it for a truth; that those he speaks worst of behind their backs are in the surest way of preferment; and whenever he begins to praise you to others, or to yourself, you are from that day forlorn. The worst mark you can receive is a promise, especially when it is confirmed with an oath; after which every man retires, and gives over all hopes.

Note.
Quotation.
“There are three methods by which a man may rise to be chief minister. The first is, by knowing how, with prudence, to dispose of a wife, a daughter, or a sister; the second, by betraying or undermining his predecessor; and the third is, by a furious zeal in public assemblies, against the corruptions of the court. But a wise prince would rather choose to employ those who practise the last of these methods: because such zealots prove always the most obsequious and subservient to the will and passions of their master. That these ministers, having all employments at their disposal, preserve themselves in power by bribing the majority of a senate or great council; and at last, by an expedient called an act of indemnity, they secure themselves from after-reckonings and retire from the public laden with the spoils of the nation.

“The palace of a chief minister is a seminary to breed up others in his own trade: the pages, lackeys, and porter, by imitating their master, become ministers of state in their several districts, and learn to excel in the three principal ingredients of insolence, lying, and bribery. Accord-

ingly, they have a subaltern court paid to them by persons of the best rank; and sometimes by the force of dexterity and impudence arrive, through several gradations, to be successors to their lord. He is usually governed by a decayed wench, or favourite footman, who are the tunnels through which all graces are conveyed, and may properly be called, in the last resort, the governors of the kingdom."

So much for the prime minister. The following is Swift's view of the House of Commons. At Glubbudrib, the island of sorcerers, Captain Gulliver is able to call up before him any character or scene in past or present history. "I desired that the senate of Rome might appear before me in one large chamber, and a modern representative assembly in counterview in another. The first seemed to be an assembly of heroes and demigods; the other a knot of pedlars, pickpockets, highwaymen, and bullies."

This was bad; but the House of Commons, according to Gulliver, is a communion of saints when compared with the House of Lords. "Our young noblemen," says he, "are bred from their childhood in idleness and luxury; as soon as years will permit, they consume their vigour; and when their fortunes are almost ruined, they marry some woman of mean birth, disagreeable person, and unsound constitution (merely for the sake of the money), whom they hate and despise. By which means the family seldom continues above three generations; a weak, diseased body, a meagre countenance, and sallow complexion are the true marks of noble blood; and a healthy, robust appearance is so disgraceful in a man of quality, that the world concludes his real father to have been a groom or a coachman. The imperfections of his mind run parallel with those of his body, being a composition of spleen, dulness, ignorance, caprice, sensuality and pride."

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The denunciation of war implied in the following conversation in Houyhnhnm Land between Captain Gulliver and his master, is specially remarkable.

238 "He asked me, 'What were the usual causes or motives that made one country go to war with one another?' I answered, 'They were innumerable, but I should only mention a few of the chief. 'Sometimes the ambition of princes, who never think they have land or people enough to govern; sometimes the corruption of ministers, who engage their master in a war in order to stifle or divert the clamour of the subjects against their evil administration. Difference in opinions has cost many millions of lives: for instance, whether flesh be bread, or bread be flesh; whether the juice of a certain berry be blood or wine; whether whistling be a vice or a virtue; whether it be better to kiss a post or throw it into the fire; what is the best colour for a coat, whether black, white, red or gray; and whether it should be long or short, narrow or wide, dirty or clean, with many more. Neither are any wars so furious and bloody, or of so long continuance, as those occasioned by difference in opinion, especially if it be in things indifferent.'

"'Sometimes the quarrel between two princes is to decide which of them shall dispossess a third of his dominions, where neither of them pretend to any right. Sometimes one prince quarrels with another, for fear the other should quarrel with him. Sometimes a war is entered upon because the prince is too strong, and sometimes because he is too weak. Sometimes our neighbours want the things which we have, or have the things which we want, and we both fight till they take ours, or give us theirs. It is a

* The allusions in the above passage are to disputes about Transubstantiation, the admission of the Cross into churches, and the shape and colour of ecclesiastical vestments.

very justifiable cause of war to invade a country after the people have been wasted by famine, destroyed by pestilence, or embroiled by factions among themselves. It is justifiable to enter into war against our nearest ally when one of his towns lies convenient for us, or a territory of land, that would render our dominions round and compact. If a prince sends forces into a nation where the people are poor and ignorant, he may lawfully put half of them to death, and make slaves of the rest, in order to civilise and reduce them from their barbarous way of living. It is a very kingly, honourable, and frequent practice, when one prince desires the assistance of another to secure him against an invasion, that the assistant, when he has driven out the invader, should seize on the dominions himself, and kill, imprison, or banish the prince he came to relieve. Alliance by blood or marriage is a frequent cause of war between princes; and the nearer their kindred is, the greater their disposition is to quarrel. Poor nations are hungry, and rich nations are proud: and pride and hunger will ever be at variance. For these reasons the trade of a soldier is held the most honourable of all others, because a soldier is a Yahoo hired to kill, in cold blood, as many of his own species who have never offended him as he possibly can.' "

· If we look at private life, the condemnation is equally severe. Take, for instance, the following judgment on law and the lawyers.¹ Gulliver tells the same master as

¹ The attorney is the stock villain of eighteenth century romance. For a specimen of the class see Smollett's novel of "The Adventures of Ferdinand, Count Fathom." The attorney is always held up to reprobation in the journals, ballads, and caricatures of the time. English law during the last century was far more technical and cumbersome than now. The student of the old law of Real Property will find an excellent proof of this in the ancient method of barring an entail, by suffering a common recovery.

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above that "There was a society of men among us, bred up from their youth in the art of proving, by words multiplied for the purpose, that white is black and black is white, according as they are paid. To this society all the rest of the people are slaves. For example, if my neighbour has a mind to my cow, he has a lawyer to prove that he ought to have my cow from me. I must then hire another to defend my right, it being against all rules of law that any man should be allowed to speak for himself. Now, in this case, I, who am the right owner, lie under two great disadvantages—first, my lawyer, being practised almost from his cradle in defending falsehood, is quite out of his element when he would be an advocate for justice, which is an unnatural office he always attempts with great awkwardness, if not with ill-will. The second disadvantage is, that my lawyer must proceed with great caution, or else he will be reprimanded by the judges and abhorred by his brethren, as one that would lessen the practice of the law. And therefore I have but two methods to preserve my cow. The first is to gain over my adversary's lawyer with a double fee, who will then betray his client by insinuating that he has justice on his side. The second way is, for my lawyer to make my cause appear as unjust as he can, by allowing the cow to belong to my adversary; and this, if it be skilfully done, will certainly bespeak the favour of the bench. . . . The judges are persons appointed to decide all controversies of property, as well as for the trial of criminals, and picked out from the most dexterous lawyers, who are grown old or lazy; and having been biassed all their lives against truth and equity, lie under such a fatal necessity of favouring fraud, perjury and oppression, that I have known some of them refuse a large bribe from the side where justice lay, rather than injure the faculty, by doing anything unbecoming their nature or their office. . . .

✓ "In pleading, the lawyers studiously avoid entering into the merits of the cause, but are loud, violent, and tedious in dwelling upon all circumstances which are not to the purpose. For instance, in the case already mentioned, they never desire to know what claim or title my adversary has to my cow; but whether the said cow were red or black; her horns long or short; whether the field I graze her in be round or square; whether she was milked at home or abroad; what diseases she is subject to, and the like; after which they consult precedents, adjourn the cause from time to time, and in ten, twenty, or thirty years come to an issue."

"It is likewise to be observed, that this society has a peculiar cant and jargon of their own, that no other mortal can understand, and wherein all their laws are written, which they take special care to multiply; whereby they have wholly confounded the very essence of truth and falsehood, of right and wrong; so that it will take thirty years to decide whether the field left me by my ancestors for six generations belongs to me or to a stranger three hundred miles off."

Swift's view of things in general is summed up in the comment put into the King of Brobdingnag's mouth on the view given by Gulliver of the state of England.

"My little friend, you have made a most admirable panegyric upon your country; you have clearly proved that ignorance, idleness, and vice, are the proper ingredients for qualifying a legislator; that laws are best explained, interpreted, and applied, by those whose interest and abilities lie in perverting, confounding, and eluding them. I observe among you some lines of an institution, which, in its original, might have been tolerable, but these half erased, and the rest wholly blurred and blotted by corruptions. It does not appear, from all

you have said, how any one perfection is required, toward the procurement of any one station among you; much less, that men are ennobled on account of their virtue; that priests are advanced for their piety and learning; soldiers for their conduct or valour; judges for their integrity; senators for the love of their country; or counsellors for their wisdom. "As for yourself," continued the king, "who have spent the greater part of your life in travelling, I am well disposed to hope you may hitherto have escaped many vices of your country. But by what I have gathered from your own relation, and the answers I have with much pains wringed and extorted from you, I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth."

Is there, then, no hope for his fellow-men? Absolutely none, answers Captain Gulliver. In the academy of Lagado he met many impostors, drivellers, and idiots. But those for whom he reserves his most withering scorn were a set of political projectors who were "proposing schemes for persuading monarchs to choose favourites upon the score of their wisdom, capacity, and virtue; of teaching ministers to consult the public good; of rewarding merit, great abilities, and eminent services; of instructing princes to know their true interest by placing it on the same foundation with that of their people; of choosing for employments persons qualified to exercise them;" with many other wild impossible chimeras, that never entered before into the heart of man to conceive; and confirmed in me the old observation, "That there is nothing so extravagant and irrational, which some philosophers have not maintained for truth."

Swift's ideal in politics may be gathered from what he finds among the good-natured giants of Brobdingnag.



"I remember very well in a discourse one day with the king when I happened to say, 'there were several thousand books among us written upon the art of government,' it gave him (directly contrary to my intention) a very mean opinion of our understandings. He professed both to abominate and despise all mystery, refinement, and intrigue either in a prince or in a minister. He could not tell what I meant by secrets of state, where an enemy or some rival nation was not in the case. He confined the knowledge of governing within very narrow bounds, to common sense and reason, to justice and lenity, to the speedy determination of civil and criminal causes; with some other obvious topics, which are not worth considering. And he gave it for his opinion, 'that whoever could make two ears of corn, or two blades of grass, to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country, than the whole race of politicians put together. . . . No law of that country (Brobdingnag) must exceed in words the number of letters in their alphabet, which consists only of two-and-twenty. But indeed few of them extend even to that length. They are expressed in the most plain and simple terms, wherein those people are not mercurial enough to discover above one interpretation'; and to write a comment upon any law is a capital crime. As to the decision of civil causes, or proceedings against criminals, their precedents are so few, that they have little reason to boast of any extraordinary skill in either."

Many passages in Gulliver illustrate Swift's peculiar views on family life and education. The following is from the voyage to Lilliput:

"Their notions relating to the duties of parents and children differ extremely from ours. . . . They will never

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allow that a child is under any obligation to his parents for bringing him into the world. . . . Their opinion is, that parents are the last of all others to be entrusted with the education of their own children: and therefore they have in every town public nurseries, where all parents, except cottagers and labourers, are obliged to send their infants of both sexes to be reared and educated, when they come to the age of twenty moons, at which time they are supposed to have some rudiments of docility. These schools are of several kinds, suited to different qualities and to both sexes. They have certain professors, well skilled in preparing children for such a condition of life as befits the rank of their parents, and their own capacities, as well as inclinations." Swift then describes with evident approval the method of education followed by the Lilliputians. At a very early age, children are sent to these establishments where they receive nurture and education till of marriageable age. "Their parents are suffered to see them only twice a year; the visit is to last but an hour; they are allowed to kiss the child at meeting and parting; but a professor, who always stands by on those occasions, will not suffer them to whisper, or use any fondling expressions, or bring any presents of toys, sweetmeats, or the like." All who have children in the public establishments are compelled to pay the expenses of education. "For the Lilliputians think nothing can be more unjust than for people, in subservience to their own appetites, to bring children into the world and leave the burden of supporting them on the public." A similar absence of parental affection, and a similar respect for what is now known as Malthusianism, are admirably noted by Swift among the Houyhnhnms.

"They have no fondness for their colts or foals, but the care they take in educating them proceeds entirely from

the dictates of reason. And I observed my master (the dapple-grey horse) to show the same affection for his neighbour's issue that he had for his own. They will have it that nature teaches them to love the whole species, and it is reason only that makes a distinction of persons, where there is a superior degree of virtue."

Besides this philosophic absence of fondness for their offspring, the Houyhnhnms are unaffected by the loss of particular friends or near relations. "If they can avoid casualties, they die only of old age, and are buried in the obscurest places that can be found; their friends and relations expressing neither joy nor grief at their departure; nor does the dying person discover the least regret that he is leaving the world, any more than if he were upon returning home from a visit to one of his neighbours." Gulliver notes with admiration that in the well-bred Houyhnhnm households there are never more than two children. As a consequence, that country never suffers from the miseries caused by over-population. 26 1

Marriage as practised among men excited Swift's extreme contempt. It was very different in his ideal equine State.

"Courtship, love, presents, jointures, settlements, have no place in their thoughts, or terms whereby to express them in their language. The young couple meet and are joined, merely because it is the determination of their parents and friends; it is what they see done every day, and they look upon it as one of the necessary actions of a reasonable being. But unhappiness resulting from marriage was never heard of; and the married pair pass their lives with the same friendship and mutual benevolence that they bear to all others of the same species who come in their way, without jealousy, fondness, quarrelling, or discontent." 26 2

His ideal of female education is well set forth by what he finds among the Lilliputians.

"If it be found that the nurses ever presume to entertain the girls with frightful or foolish stories, or the common follies practised by chambermaids among us, they are publicly whipped thrice about the city, imprisoned for a year, and banished for life to the most desolate part of the country. Thus, the young ladies there are as much ashamed of being cowards and fools as the men, and despise all personal adornments beyond decency and cleanliness; neither did I perceive any difference in the education made by their difference of sex, only that the exercise of the females were not altogether so robust, and that some rules were given them relating to domestic life; and a smaller compass of learning was enjoined them: for their maxim is that among people of quality a wife should be always a reasonable and agreeable companion, because she cannot always be young."

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The same rule is followed in the land of horses. Gulliver's master "thought it monstrous in us to give the females a different kind of education from the males, except in articles of domestic management; whereby, as he truly observed, one-half of our natives were good for nothing but being mothers; and to trust the care of our children to such useless animals, he said, was yet a greater instance of brutality."

The following is interesting in view of Swift's hatred of falsehood:

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"The Houyhnhnms have no word for 'lying.' When they doubt some of Captain Gulliver's statements, they tax him with 'saying the thing which is not.' It is with the greatest difficulty that he makes them understand the meaning of the words 'lying' or 'misrepresentation.' 'The use of speech,' say these right-minded creatures,

' was to make us understand one another, and to receive information of facts; now, if any one said the thing which was not, these ends were defeated because I cannot properly be said to understand him; and I am so far from receiving information that he leaves me worse than in ignorance; for I am led to believe a thing black when it is white, and short when it is long.' And these were all the notions he had concerning the faculty of lying, so perfectly well understood, and so universally practised, among human creatures."

In his visit to Luggnagg, Captain Gulliver comes across the Struldbrugs, *i.e.*, the people who never die. Their description occupies the most frightful and at the same time the most significant page in Swift's writings. From his youth upwards, Swift had a horror of old age. The disease, querulousness and decay which accompany advancing years, seemed to him to rob poor humanity of the only merits which made it endurable. Most of all he dreaded old age for himself. He was a lonely man. His health was bad. He already often suffered from loss of memory. And he contemplated with terror the approach of that cheerless twilight of physical and mental ruin which in so many cases precedes the end.

"They (the Struldbrugs) commonly acted like mortals till about thirty years old, after which by degrees they grew melancholy and dejected, increasing in both till they came to fourscore. When they came to fourscore years, which is reckoned the extremity of living in this country, they had not only all the follies and infirmities of other old men, but many more, which arose from the dreadful prospect of never dying. They were not only opinionative, peevish, covetous, morose, vain, talkative, but incapable of friendship, and dead to all natural affection, which never descended below their grandchildren. Envy

and impotent desires are their prevailing passions. But those objects against which their envy seems principally directed are the vices of the younger sort and the deaths of the old. By reflecting on the former they find themselves cut off from all possibility of pleasure ; and whenever they see a funeral they lament and repine that others are gone to a harbour of rest to which they themselves can never hope to arrive. They have no remembrance of anything but what they learned and observed in their youth and middle age, and even that is very imperfect. And for the truth or particulars of any fact, it is safer to depend on common tradition than upon their best recollections. The least miserable among them appear to be those who turn to dotage and entirely lose their memories ; these meet with more pity and assistance because they want many bad qualities which abound in others. . . .

“At ninety they lose their teeth and hair ; they have at that age no distinction of taste, but eat and drink whatever they can get, without relish or appetite. The diseases they were subject to still continue, without increasing or diminishing. In talking they forget the common appellation of things and the names of persons, even of those who are their nearest friends and relations. For the same reason they never can amuse themselves with reading, because their memory will not serve to carry them from the beginning of a sentence to the end ; and by this defect they are deprived of the only entertainment whereof they might otherwise be capable.

“The language of this country being always on the flux, the Struldbrugs of one age do not understand those of another ; neither are they able, after two hundred years, to hold any conversation (further than by a few general words) with their neighbours, the mortals ; and

thus they lie under the disadvantage of living like foreigners in their own country. . . .

"I afterwards saw five or six of different ages, the youngest not above two hundred years old, who were brought to me at several times by some of my friends, but although they were told 'that I was a great traveller, and had seen all the world,' they had not the least curiosity to ask me a question; only desired I would give them *slumskudask*, or a token of remembrance; which is a modest way of begging, to avoid the law that strictly forbids it, because they are provided for by the public, although indeed with a scanty allowance. . . .

"They were the most mortifying sight I ever beheld; and the women more horrible than the men. Besides the usual deformities in extreme old age, they acquired an additional ghastliness, in proportion to their number of years, which is not to be described; and among half a dozen I soon distinguished which was the eldest, although there was not above a century or two between them."

Attempts have been made to assign a definite aim to "Gulliver's Travels." According to some critics it was to mortify pride; according to others it sought to exalt the virtues of simplicity; others again have looked on it as a political allegory applicable solely to the time at which it was written. But on a careful reading of the work I feel unable to accept this view. It is not so much a satire at all as a universal denunciation. It is Timon howling out curses against the world; or Mephistopheles counting up the sins and follies of mankind with a sneer of triumph. According to Gulliver, man's instincts are vile, his civilisation is vile, and the two together produce the most execrable combination in

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nature. No sex, no class, no institution, no sentiment, no theory is mentioned save for sweeping condemnation.

The simplicity of the style, the protestations of partiality for his fellows, the affected disregard for an inevitable conclusion, all serve to bring out with greater force the underlying contempt and hate. In the records of misanthropy "Gulliver's Travels" stands for all time supreme and unapproachable.

Swift came back to England for another visit in April, 1727. "Gulliver's Travels" had had an immediate and unprecedented success, and he was received by the wits with raptures of delight. He made arrangements for a tour in France; the great Voltaire, whom he now first met, giving him a letter of introduction to M. de Morville, the French secretary of state. On June 10, 1727, the death of George I. filled the Tories with a hope that their exclusion from power was now at an end. But it was not to be. The new king, George II., had shown Tory leanings while Prince of Wales solely and simply to annoy his father. Now that he was on the throne he saw no reason for discarding the Whigs. From personal dislike to Walpole he made a sort of attempt to push forward Sir Spencer Compton, speaker of the House of Commons and treasurer of the new monarch's household, when the latter was Prince of Wales. But Compton was devoid of energy. Walpole promptly won back the royal favour by offering to add £130,000 a year to the civil list, and to give Queen Caroline a jointure of £100,000 a year more; and the great Whig minister remained in office, thanking his God that he had a country to sell.

The events connected with the accession of George II. had put a stop to Swift's projected journey to France. By the time that the political excitement had subsided,

his health had again become so bad that an extended voyage was out of the question. There had come upon him a great weariness. His friends crowded round with proposals, literary and political; but they interested him not. Stella, after a slight improvement, had suffered a relapse, and Swift now expected news of her death by every post. "I have just received yours of August 24th," he writes to Sheridan, on September 2nd. "I kept it an hour in my pocket with all the suspense of a man who expected to hear the worst news that fortune could give him; and at the same time was not able to hold up my head. These are the perquisites of living long; the last act of life is always a tragedy at best; but it is a bitter aggravation to have one's best friend go before one. . . . I do profess, upon my salvation, that the distressed and desperate condition of our friend makes life so indifferent to me, who by course of nature have so little left, that I do not think it worth the time to struggle; yet I should think, according to what hath been formerly, that I may happen to overcome this present disorder; and to what advantage? Why, to see the loss of that person for whose sake only life was worth preserving." Swift's uneasiness alarmed his friends. But he resented their sympathy. Fearful to the last of Stella's reputation, he wrote to his friend Worrall pointing out that scandal would arise if her decease took place at the deanery. If she were well enough therefore let her be removed to her own lodgings. From his letters it would seem that he could not trust himself to be present at her death-bed. But the increase of his own attacks of giddiness and deafness soon grew so severe as to render further stay with his friends out of the question.

In Dublin at least he would feel at home. In the middle of September he left London for Holyhead. He

had to wait a week before the packet sailed, and occupied his time in jotting down his impressions on the inconveniences of country inns, and the miseries of Ireland, in a curious little notebook still preserved at South Kensington Museum. At length, early in October, he was able to start for Ireland. He was never to visit his English friends again.

He spent a gloomy autumn in Dublin. Esther Johnson, though cruelly tortured by asthma, lingered till, on the January 28th following, she "closed her weary pilgrimage." We will conclude with an extract from Swift's account of his dear friend's character and virtues.

"This day, being Sunday, January 28, 1728, about eight o'clock at night, a servant brought me a note with an account of the death of the truest, most virtuous, and valuable friend that I, or perhaps any other person, was ever blessed with. . . .

"Never was any of her sex born with better gifts of the mind, or who more improved them by reading and conversation. Yet her memory was not of the best, and was impaired in the latter years of her life. But I cannot call to mind that I ever once heard her make a wrong judgment of persons, books or affairs. Her advice was always the best, and with the greatest freedom, mixed with the greatest decency. She had a gracefulness, something more than human, in every motion, word, and action. Never was so happy a conjunction of civility, freedom, easiness and sincerity. . . . A rude or conceited coxcomb passed his time very ill, upon the least breach of respect ; for, in such a case, she had no mercy, but was sure to expose him to the contempt of the standers-by, yet in such a manner as he was ashamed to complain, and durst not resent. All of us who had the happiness of her friendship agreed unanimously, that, in an afternoon or



L. Kneller, pin. sc.

*Esther Johnson (Stella)
from a picture in the possession of G. Villiers-Bruce Esq.*

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evening's conversation, she never failed before we parted of delivering the best thing that was said in the company. . . .

"Her servants loved and almost adored her at the same time; she would, upon occasions, treat them with freedom; yet her demeanour was so awful, that they durst not fail in the least point of respect. She chid them seldom, but it was with severity which had an effect upon them for a long time after.

January 29th.—"My head aches, and I can write no more.

January 30th, Tuesday.—"This is the night of the funeral,¹ which my sickness will not suffer me to attend. It is now nine at night, and I am removed into another apartment, that I may not see the light in the church, which is just over against the window of my bed-chamber. . . .

"She was never known to cry out, or discover any fear, in a coach or on horseback, or any uneasiness by those sudden accidents with which most of her sex, either by weakness or affectation, appear so much disordered.

"She never had the least absence of mind in conversation, or was given to interruption, or appeared eager to put in her word, by waiting impatiently until another had done. She spoke in a most agreeable voice, in the plainest words, never hesitating, except out of modesty before new faces, where she was somewhat reserved; nor, among her nearest friends, ever spoke much at a time. She was but little versed in the common topics of female chat: scandal, censure, and detraction never came out of her mouth; yet, among a few friends, in private conversation, she made little ceremony in discovering her con-

¹ In the upper and middle classes funerals at this time always took place at night.

tempt of a coxcomb, and describing all his follies to the life; but the follies of her own sex she was rather inclined to extenuate or to pity.

“Her charity to the poor was a duty not to be diminished, and therefore became a tax upon those tradesmen who furnish the fopperies of other ladies. She bought clothes as seldom as possible, and those as plain and cheap as consisted with the situation she was in; and wore no lace for many years. Either her judgment or fortune was extraordinary in the choice of those on whom she bestowed her charity, for it went further in doing good than double the sum from any other hand. And I have heard her say, ‘she always met with gratitude from the poor,’ which must be owing to her skill in distinguishing proper objects, as well as her gracious manner in relieving them. . . .

“By returning very few visits, she had not much company of her own sex, except those whom she most loved for their easiness, or esteemed for their good sense; and those, not insisting on ceremony, came often to her. But she rather chose men for her companions, the usual topics of ladies’ discourse being such as she had little knowledge of, and less rich. Yet no man was upon the rack to entertain her, for she hastily descended to anything that was innocent and diverting. News, politics, censure, family management, or town talk, she always diverted to something else; but these indeed seldom happened, for she chose her company better; and therefore many, who mistook her and themselves, having solicited her acquaintance, and finding themselves disappointed, after a few visits dropped off; and she was never known to inquire into the reason, nor ask what was become of them. . . .

“*When she was once convinced, by open facts, of any breach*

*of truth or honour in a person of high station, especially in the church, she could not conceal her indignation, nor hear them named without showing her displeasure in her countenance ;*¹ particularly one or two of the latter sort, whom she had known and esteemed, but detested above all mankind, when it was manifest that they had sacrificed those two precious virtues to their ambition, and would much sooner have forgiven them the common immoralities of the laity. . . .

"Although her knowledge from books and company was much more extensive than usually falls to the share of her sex, yet she was so far from making a parade of it, that her female visitants, on their first acquaintance, who expected to discover it by what they call hard words and deep discourse, would be sometimes disappointed and say, 'They found she was like other women.' But wise men, through all her modesty, whatever they discoursed on, could easily observe that she understood them very well, by the judgment shown in her observations, as well as in her questions."²

So died Esther Johnson in the forty-sixth year of her age. In Swift's private life Stella and Vanessa occupy a place curiously similar to that held by Oxford and Bolingbroke in his public career. The brilliancy and culture of the first of each pair pleased his imagination. The honesty and plainness of the others won his heart. For a parallel for Swift's affection for Stella there is no better one than that of Hamlet for Ophelia. The Danish

¹ The italics are my own. Would a person of this character have consented to the eleven years of acted falsehood involved in a secret marriage with Swift?

² From a paper of Swift entitled "On the death of Mrs. Johnson." The reader will remember that at this time even unmarried ladies were styled "Mrs."

prince found in the simplicity and naturalness of the one a relief from the corruption and hollowness of a depraved court. Swift, in the straightforward character, and unassuming devotion of the other, obtained consolation for the folly, perverseness and deceit which his "savage indignation" led him to regard as the dominating qualities of all mankind.

CHAPTER IX.

SETTLED IN IRELAND.

Commencement of the last period of Swift's life—A Dublin potentate—Lord Carteret his only Castle friend—Swift's manner of life—His circle—Close intimacy with Dr. Thomas Sheridan—Trifles passing between them—The art of punning—Occasional verses—"Mary the Cookmaid's Letter to Dr. Sheridan"—Sheridan and the vice-regal chaplaincy—Swift's harshness—Parsimony—His views on woman—"Letter to a very young lady on her marriage"—Public affairs—The government of Ireland—Swift's isolation—The "Answer to *The Craftsman*"—*The Intelligencer*—The famine of 1729—"The Modest Proposal for preventing the Children of Poor People in Ireland from being a Burden to their Parents"—Significance of this work—Growing alienation between Swift and the Irish Parliament.

THE year 1728 ushers in the last period of Swift's life. The death of Stella had deprived him of his chief link with early memories. Never again does he leave Ireland; and the connection with his English friends grows fainter year by year. There is nothing now to check the deepening bitterness and despondency which were eventually to crush his genius in their icy grasp.

Yet these last years are not without their brighter side. Swift had always made the most of his position as dean of St. Patrick's. But the immense reputation he acquired through the Drapier's Letters turned him into the autocrat of Dublin as well. "Shall Jonathan die?" cried an

enthusiastic Quaker during the height of the agitation against Wood's halfpence, "who has wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day." The text had been taken up with delight; and from that time Swift's popularity was assured. His eccentric character, his sardonic humour, his ready insight into their peculiarities were thoroughly appreciated by the citizens of the Irish capital. They gave him a tremendous welcome on his return from England, and celebrated his birthday regularly every year with public rejoicings. In 1729 the Corporation presented him with the freedom of the city. He was hated by the ruling faction, or English ascendancy party, as they were called. But Lord Carteret, though a Whig in politics, was a personal friend of Swift's; and during that nobleman's viceroyalty (1724-1730) Swift was a frequent guest at Dublin Castle. Carteret incurred much obloquy from his intimacy with an opposition partisan. To check this, Swift put forth an amusing "Vindication of Lord Carteret," in which it was pointed out that literary tastes and a predilection for learned acquaintances, irrespective of the fact whether they were Whig or Tory, need not necessarily place a man outside the pale of humanity.

On the whole, Swift, after his settlement at St. Patrick's, led a rather secluded life. He spent a great deal of time in renewing his acquaintance with classical and historical literature. He performed his ecclesiastical duties with exemplary care; and he carried on an extensive correspondence with his English friends. All contemporary writers speak in the highest terms of the Dublin society of that time. The presence of a legislature consisting mainly of wealthy and well-born men gave it a fulness

and *éclat* which it has ceased to possess since the Act of Union. Hospitality was generous without display; public entertainments were brilliant, refined, and at the same time devoid of the formalism which marked the great world of London. Swift, however, preferred to confine himself to a small circle of chosen friends. Among others, he speaks well of Dr. Helsham, "an ingenious good-humoured physician, a fine gentleman, an excellent scholar, easy in his fortunes, kind to everybody, has abundance of friends, entertains them often and liberally." He was intimate with several of the Fellows of Trinity College, Dublin, notably the accomplished Dr. Patrick Delany, whose biographical notice of Swift is a work of great value. Swift's circle also comprised the Grattans, a family of seven brothers, the sons of a wealthy clergyman, resident in Dublin. The latter, so Monck Mason records on the authority of the old Bishop of Clogher, "kept hospitality beyond both the lords who lived on either side of him." One of the Grattan brothers, an eminent merchant, became lord mayor of Dublin. The others earned equal distinction in the liberal professions. But Swift's favourite was the Lord of Quilca, Dr. Thomas Sheridan.¹ The latter was always welcome at the deanery. Alone among Swift's friends Sheridan had the power, by a sudden jest, of diverting the dean from those sudden fits of anger to which he became liable with declining years. Swift and Sheridan delighted in writing to one another in doggerel Latin, or more frequently in Latin words written so as to sound like English. The following is a brief example of the latter :

"Præbe specus a Superaturus. Summas par a gusto

¹ His son wrote a Life of Swift. Richard Brinsley Sheridan was his grandson.

eat. Sum colli flo ures, ac ab age lætis fora Sal ad." The interpretation of this is: "*Pray bespeak us a supper at your house. Some asparagus to eat. Some cauliflowers, a cabbage, lettuce for a salad.*"

Both Swift and Sheridan were fond of punning. They wrote to one another in letters composed of puns, and united together to write a curious tract, "*Ars Punica; i.e. The Art of Punning*," in a preface and thirty-seven rules. Puns are given to illustrate every rule: *e.g.*

"Rule 1. *The Capital Rule*. He that puns must have a *head* for it; that is, he must be a man of letters, of a sprightly and fine imagination, whatever men may think of his judgment; like Dr. Swift, who said, when a lady threw down a Cremona fiddle with the frisk of her mantua—'Mantua, væ! miserae nimium vicina Cremonae!'"

"Rule 12. *The Elementary Rule*. Keep to your elements, whether you have fish, fowl, or flesh for dinner; as, for instance, 'Is not this fish *ex-stream* sweet? On my sole, I never tasted better.'"

"Rule 24. *The Salic Rule* is a pretence to a jumping of wits: that is, when a man has made a good pun, the other swears with a pun he was just coming out with it. One night, I remember, Mr. — served Dr. — so. The former, saying over a bottle, 'Will, I am for my mistress here.'—'How so?' says Tom.—'Why, I am for *Wine-if-red!*'—'By this crooked stick' (*cane-a-wry, i.e. Canary*) 'I was coming out with it.'

"Rule 28. *The Brazen-head Rule* is when a punster stands his ground against a whole company, though there is not one to side with him, to the utter destruction of all conversation but his own; *e.g.* says one, 'I hate a pun.' Then he, 'When a *pun* is meant, is it a *punishment*?'—'Deuce take your quibbling!'—'Sir, I will not bate

you an *ace*, *cinque* me if I do.'—'This fellow cannot talk out of his *element*.'—'To divert you was *all I meant*.'"

Swift and Sheridan wrote enough doggerel verses to one another on subjects such as dinner parties and daily accidents to fill a moderate-sized volume.

Swift, for instance, thus summarises his views on the classical dramatists :

"Whate'er your predecessors taught us,
I have a great esteem for Plautus ;
And think your boys may gather there-hence
More wit and humour than from Terence ;
But as to comic Aristophanes,
The rogue too vicious and too profane is.

.
Proceed to tragics : first Euripides
(An author where I sometimes nip a-days)
Is rightly censured by the Stagirite,
Who says his numbers do not fadge aright.
A friend of mine that author despises
So much he swears the very best piece is,
For aught he knows, as bad as Thespis's ;
And that a woman in these tragedies,
Commonly speaking, but a sad jade is.
At least I'm well assured that no folk lays
The weight on him they do on Sophocles.
But, above all, I prefer Æschylus,
Whose moving touches, when they please, kill us."

The following is a supposed letter from Swift's venerable cook, Mary, or "Sweetheart" as he always called her, to Dr. Sheridan, who had called the dean a knave :

"MARY THE COOKMAID'S LETTER TO DOCTOR SHERIDAN."

"Well, if ever I saw such another man since my mother bound up my head !
You a gentleman ! Marry come up ! I wonder where you were bred ?

I'm sure such words does not become a man of your cloth ;
I would not give such language to a dog, faith and troth.
Yes, you call'd my master a knave ; fie, Mr. Sheridan ! 'tis a shame
For a parson, who should know better things, to come out with such
a name.

Knave in your teeth, Mr. Sheridan ! 'tis both a shame and a sin ;
And the dean, my master, is an honester man than you and all your
kin :

He has more goodness in his little finger than you have in your whole
body.

My master is a parsonable man, and not a spindle-shanked hoddyy-
doddy.

And now, whereby I find you would fain make an excuse,

Because my master one day in anger call'd you a goose :

Which, and I am sure I have been his servant four years since
October,

And he never call'd me worse than sweetheart, drunk or sober :

Not that I know his reverence was ever concern'd to my knowledge,

Though you and your come-rogues keep him out so late in your
college."

The amount of care Swift devoted to trifles like the foregoing was extraordinary. Lord Orrery blames him for not spending his time better. A wiser critic will recognise Swift's fondness for such childish distractions as perfectly natural. The great Dean of St. Patrick's could not be always railing at human folly in general, or political malpractices in particular ; and his emotions would have soon become unendurable, had they not been able to find relief in less heart-killing occupations.

Sheridan was at once the kindest and the most simple-minded of men. Of the value of money he had no idea. Though possessed of private property and a flourishing school, a fondness for lavish hospitality kept him in continual difficulties. Swift, ever zealous about the private affairs of his friends—a quality which must have been singularly unpleasant at times, however excellent the motive—made himself Sheridan's mentor. He took great

interest in his school, advised him about the management of his revenues, and obtained for him the post of chaplain to the viceroy, Lord Carteret. But poor Sheridan, in addition to being the most extravagant, was the most absent-minded of men. On the ensuing August 1st, the anniversary of the accession to the throne of the house of Hanover, he happened to be asked to preach at Cork. In sublime ignorance of its obvious application he chose as his text: "Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof." The cry of "Jacobite!" was promptly raised by the Castle sycophants; Sheridan's name was struck off the list of viceregal chaplains, and his chances of promotion ruined.

Swift's habits of bullying and banter grew upon him with years. Even Sheridan was often treated as a butt rather than a companion. The latter's good-nature must have been indeed extraordinary if he endured such gibes as Swift's "Character of the Second Solomon." The "Second Solomon" was Sheridan himself, and the "character" is an elaborate list of all his private failings, especially his carelessness in money matters. Sheridan's wife was a slattern and a shrew; but was he much amused at the following verses on her which Swift composed and sent to him?

"Come sit by my side, while this picture I draw.
In chattering a magpie, in pride a jackdaw,
A temper the devil himself could not bridge,
Impertinent mixture of busy and idle."

Swift paid frequent visits to friends' country houses, where he must have been a most troublesome guest. Wherever he went he exacted absolute submission to his every caprice. At Sir Arthur Acheson's he cut down a fine thorn-tree without deigning to ask his host's permission. He inquired into people's most private concerns

with the most insulting pertinacity. If a poor man entertained him sumptuously he reproved him for his extravagance. At the deanery his guests trembled before him. Occasionally he was pleased by a smart repartee; but in general the slightest contradiction plunged him into an ungovernable rage. And the time was fast coming when his sole companions would be reduced to flatterers and sycophants. Another habit which grew upon him was avarice. Though the wine was good, the deanery dinners were remarkable for their meagreness; and, in haggling over the details of a bill, Dr. Swift displayed a keenness and determination which aroused the envy and despair of all who entered into business relations with him. It must, however, be remembered in his behalf that every shilling saved from his personal expenses was either devoted to immediate charity, or went to swell the fund he intended to leave at his death as a bequest to the public. To the poor of his parish he paid great attention. He built an almshouse at his own expense; he carried out a system by which deserving beggars were distinguished by badges; he assisted workmen or small tradesmen in temporary distress with loans repayable in weekly instalments. His private donations were very large. He allowed Mrs. Dingley £52 a year; he maintained his sister, who did not die till 1738; and destitute persons of his own class, if properly recommended, always obtained a recompense. Swift's charity, however, was unsentimental to an excess; and his donations were accompanied with a contemptuous harshness which must have made many a recipient regret his application.

To women, Swift was ruder even than to men. To the end of his days the great dean looked on those delicacies and refinements, which are the special pre-

rogative of the fair sex, as silly affectation. The "drudge" theory of womanhood, very prevalent at that time, inspired him with equal dislike. To Swift, the perfect woman was a being who in intellectual attainments, social theories, and business-like capability, was identical with a well-educated and able man. His views on this subject are summarised in a "Letter to a very Young Lady on her Marriage,"¹ from which the following is extracted. It is a pity that we do not possess the answer.

"MADAM,—The hurry and impertinence of receiving and paying visits on account of your marriage being now over, you are beginning to enter into a course of life where you will want much advice to divert you from falling into many errors, fopperies, and follies to which your sex is liable. . . . Your parents were so far in the right that they did not produce you much into the world, whereby you avoided many wrong steps which others have taken, and have fewer ill impressions to be removed; but they failed, as is generally the case, in too much neglecting to cultivate your mind; without which it is impossible to acquire or preserve the friendship and esteem of a wise man, who soon grows weary of acting the lover, but wants a reasonable companion, and a true friend through every stage of life. It must be therefore your business to qualify yourself for those offices; wherein I shall not fail to be your director as long as I shall think you deserve it, by letting you know how you are to act and what you are to avoid." Swift then starts off with a piece of advice, which at the present day ought to be inscribed on the walls of many a married house-

¹ Supposed to have been written on the marriage of Lady Betty Moore, daughter of the Earl of Drogheda, to Mr. George Rochfort.

hold. Beware, says he, of that most odious of all practices, the expression of fondness for your husband, by endearing words or pet caresses, when there is a third party present. In the same way the lady should not affect an unreasonable uneasiness when her husband is away; starting at every knock at the door, and running to see if it is her husband come back. Nor should she "receive him at his return with such a medley of chiding and kindness, and catechizing him where he has been, that a shrew from Billingsgate would be a more easy and eligible companion." Equally reprehensible are those wives "who, when their husband is gone on a journey, must have a letter every post, upon pain of fit or hysterics."

As to society, Swift starts with the dictum that he "never yet knew a tolerable woman to be fond of her own sex." If his correspondent wishes for lady companions, let her have as few as possible—"half-a-dozen fools are, in all conscience, as many as you should require;" and let her make it a fixed rule "to proceed in her practice and behaviour directly contrary to whatever they shall say or do." In the same way she must beware of men companions whose sole recommendation is their fitness for frivolous society; and she must never amuse herself with the stories her maid tells her about other houses in which she has been in service.

Swift then proceeds with his positive recommendations as follows:

"You have but a very few years to be young and handsome in the eyes of the world, and as few months to be so in the eyes of a husband who is not a fool; for I hope you do not still dream of charms and raptures, which marriage ever did and ever will put a sudden end to. Besides, yours was a match of prudence and common

good liking, without any mixture of ridiculous passion which has no being but in play-books and romances. You must therefore use all endeavours to attain to some degree of those accomplishments which your husband most values in other people, and for which he is most valued himself. You must improve your mind by closely pursuing such a method of study as I shall direct or approve of. You must get a collection of history and travels, which I will recommend to you, and spend some hours every day in reading them, and making extracts from them if your memory be weak. . . .

“If you are in company with men of learning, though they happen to discourse of arts and sciences out of your compass, yet you will gather more advantage by listening to them than from all the nonsense and frippery of your own sex, and if they be men of breeding as well as learning they will seldom engage in any conversation where you ought not to be a hearer, and in time have their part. If they talk of the manners and customs of the several kingdoms of Europe, of travels into remoter nations of the state of your own country, or of the great men and actions of ancient Greece and Rome; if they give their judgment upon English and French writers either in verse or prose, or of the nature and limits of virtue and vice; it is a shame for an English lady not to relish such discourses, not to improve by them, and endeavour by reading and information to have her share in those entertainments, rather than turn aside, as it is the usual custom, and consult with the woman who sits next her about a new cargo of fans.” Here Swift takes opportunity to blame the English custom by which at the close of dinner the ladies leave the gentlemen to their wine. He never allowed it at the deanery. Besides the above, Swift gives many sound warnings against taking

too much interest in the fashions in dress, against extravagance, and, lastly, in case she becomes intellectual, against vanity. The sound course of instruction he intends to make her undergo will, however, obviate any possibility of the latter.

In conclusion, Swift draws, as an example of the neglect of his advice, the miseries of the ordinary lady of fashion, when old age comes upon her, then as now the saddest figure in social life. "Pray observe how insignificant things are the common race of ladies when they have passed youth and beauty, how contemptible they appear to the men, and yet more contemptible to the younger part of their own sex ; and have no relief, but in passing their afternoons in visits, where they are never acceptable, and their evenings at cards among each other, while the former part of the day is spent in spleen and envy, or in vain endeavours to repair by art and dress the ruins of time. Whereas I have known ladies at sixty, to whom all the polite part of the court and town paid their addresses without any further view than that of enjoying the pleasure of their conversation."

Swift still took a deep interest in the state of Ireland. The English Government had been greatly alarmed at their defeat on the question of Wood's halfpence, and every effort was now taken to prevent the repetition of such a disaster. The administration was left mainly in the hands of Dr. Boulter, who, as Archbishop of Armagh, and so-called Primate of All Ireland, was one of the lord-justices, or governors, of the country during the lord-lieutenant's absence. The latter, however, besides being in England more than half his time, was regarded as little more than a figure-head. Boulter, as the trusted agent of the English Government, enjoyed supreme power. He carried out his task to the letter. Public offices were

filled by Englishmen. The resident Irish gentry were discouraged and depressed. Any movement of reform was checked by a vigilant system of bribery and division. Out of a House of Commons numbering three hundred, the party of reform could rarely reckon on more than twenty-eight votes. The odds were too great, and for more than forty years following the affair of Wood's halfpence, the English ascendancy held its own untouched. In such a state of things Swift could do little. Had it been otherwise, it is doubtful whether he could have co-operated heartily with the Irish reformers. Their aims, at this time, extended not beyond the acquisition of certain privileges for the Protestant minority. From one point of view they were wise in their generation. Where parliamentary institutions exist, reform can only proceed by slow stages. But, as Swift's misanthropy and bitterness increased, the one object which began to stand out before him with burning distinctness was the frightful misery of the Irish lower classes. His soul scoffed at interminable discussions about the political rights of dependent legislatures, while the people were starving for want of bread. Parliamentary freedom might be won ; but unless a radical change took place in the relation of the landowner to his serfs, where was the benefit ?¹ As the ways grew darker,

¹ Compare for this the following extract from the seventh "Drapier's Letter," commenced in 1726 (?), but only published in 1735. "And I shall never forget what I once ventured to say to a great man in England, 'That few politicians, with all their schemes, are half so useful members of a commonwealth as an honest farmer, who, by skilfully draining, fencing, manuring, and planting, has increased the intrinsic value of a piece of land, and thereby done a perpetual service to his country ;' which it is a great controversy whether any of the former ever did since the creation of the world, but no controversy at all that ninety-nine in a hundred have done abundance of mischief." There is a curious similarity between this passage and the remarks of the King of Brobdingnag on the uselessness of politician .

the social question gradually absorbed Swift's attention to the exclusion of all other topics. Nor is his mind fixed on Irish misery save as it is a fraction of the universal sum of human misery. The Swift of the Irish tracts of 1729 and 1730 is the Swift, not of the "Drapier's Letters," but of "Gulliver's Travels." To treat them as political pronouncements is an error. They are outbursts of frantic indignation at an evil which the writer knows is too gross for remedy. It is not the English Government, it is not the Irish administration Swift attacks, but the folly, perversity, and intestine hatreds of mankind itself.¹

Among other measures for the better government of Ireland, it had recently occurred to the Whig ministry that it would be an excellent plan to facilitate the expatriation of the more vigorous Catholic inhabitants of that country. An Irish brigade had been long maintained in France. Leave was therefore given to the French Government to send a recruiting officer to Ireland to enlist young Irish Catholics for the French service. The Tory opposition soon obtained knowledge of the scheme, and on Dec. 12, 1730, a denunciation thereof appeared in their journal, *The Craftsman*. The article laid stress on the infamy of depopulating a portion of one's own country, and pointed out the folly of deliberately increasing the army of a vigilant enemy, by the accession of men animated by a bitter detestation of England's constitution and religion. The whole affair struck Swift as so characteristic of English methods that he seized on it with avidity. In a so-called "Answer to the *Craftsman*," he

¹ In 1729 Lord Allen had publicly denounced the Dublin Corporation for giving the freedom to a Tory like Swift. The latter retaliated by an extraordinary attack, a poem styled "Traulus," the insensate fury of which well illustrates the tension of his mind at this time.

published a bitterly ironical defence of the scheme. He declared that so far from being harmful, it was for the direct benefit of Ireland. He had already pointed out in his "Maxims controlled in Ireland," 1724, that ordinary principles of prosperity, *e.g.*, a growing population, did not apply to that country. He now proceeded to show that *The Craftsman* was in error when it attacked the recruiting scheme. Such action on their part was "a manifest mark of their disaffection to his majesty, a want of duty to the ministry, a wicked design of oppressing this kingdom, and a traitorous attempt to lessen the trade and manufactures of England." In the assumed strain of a member of the English ascendancy, he proceeds as follows: "Our truest and best ally, the most Christian king,[†] has obtained his majesty's licence, pursuant to law, to export from hence some thousand bodies of healthy, young, living men, to supply his Irish regiments. The King of Spain, as you assert yourself, has desired the same civility, and seems to have at least as good a claim. Supposing then that these two potentates will only desire leave to carry off 6,000 men between them to France and Spain, then by computing the maintenance of a tall, hungry Irishman in food and clothes to be only £5 per head, here will be £30,000 per annum saved clearly to the nation; for they can find no other employment at home besides begging, robbing, or stealing. But if 30,000, 40,000, or 50,000 (which we would gladly spare), were sent on the same errand, what an immense benefit it must be to us; and if the two princes, in whose service they were, should happen to be at war with each other, how soon would those recruits be destroyed! then what a number of friends would the Pretender lose, and what a

[†] Diplomatic title for the King of France. The King of Spain is always styled "His Catholic Majesty."

number of enemies all true Protestants get rid of! Add to this that then, by such a practice, the lands of Ireland that want hands for tillage must be employed in grazing, which would sink the price of wool, raw hides, butter and tallow, so that the English might have them at their own rates, and in return send us wheat to make our bread, barley to brew our drink, and oats for our horses, without any labour of our own." So far from condemning the proposal of the English Government, Swift ironically caps it by the following :

"The profitable land of this kingdom is, I think, usually computed at 17,000,000 acres, all of which I propose to be wholly turned to grazing. Now it is found by experience that one grazier and his family can manage 2,000 acres. Thus 16,800,000 acres may be managed by 8,400 families ; and the fraction of 200,000 acres will be more than sufficient for cabins, outhouses, and potato-gardens ; because it is to be understood that corn of all sorts must be sent to us from England. These 8,400 families may be divided among the four provinces, according to the number of houses in each province ; and making the equal allowance of eight to a family, the number of inhabitants will amount to 67,200 souls. To these we are to add a standing army of 20,000 English which, with their camp-followers and horse-boys, will by a gross computation, very near double the count, and be very sufficient for the defence and grazing of the kingdom, as well as to enrich our neighbours, expel popery and keep out the Pretender. And, lest the army should be at a loss for business, I think it would be very prudent to employ them in collecting the public taxes for paying themselves and the civil list.

"I advise that all our owners of these lands should live constantly in England, in order to learn politeness and to

qualify themselves for employments; but, for fear of increasing the natives in this island, that an annual draught according to the number born every year, be exported to whatever place will bear the carriage, or transplanted to the English dominions on the American continent, as a screen between his Majesty's English subjects and the savage Indians."

The following is interesting as giving a real description of Irish poverty at this time. It is from a paper called the *Intelligencer*, carried on for a short time by Swift and his friend Sheridan. The date is 1730:

"I have been at the pains to render a most exact and faithful account of all the visible signs of riches which I met with in sixty miles, riding (from Dublin to Dundalk) through the most public roads, and the best part of the kingdom. First, as to trade; I met nine cars loaden with old musty, shrivelled hides; one car-load of butter; four jockeys driving eight horses, all out of case; one cow and calf driven by a man and his wife; six tattered families flitting to be shipped off to the West Indies; a colony of one hundred and fifty beggars, all repairing to people our metropolis. . . . Secondly, travellers enough, but seven in ten wanting shirts and cravats; nine in ten going bare-foot, and carrying their brogues (shoes) and stockings in their hands; one woman in twenty having a pillion, the rest riding bare-backed; above two hundred horsemen with four pairs of boots among them all, seventeen saddles of leather (the rest being made of straw), and most of their garrons only shod before. I went into one of the principal farmer's houses out of curiosity, and his whole furniture consisted of two blocks for stools, a bench on each side the fire-place made of turf, six trenchers, one bowl, a pot, six horn spoons, three noggins, two blankets, one of which served the man and maid-servant; the other

the master of the family, his wife and five children ; a small churn, a wooden candlestick, and broken stick for a pair of tongs. In the public towns, one-third of the inhabitants walking the street bare-foot ; windows half built up with stone to save the expense of glass ; the broken pane up and down supplied by brown paper, few being able to afford white ; in some places they were stopped with hay or straw. Another mark of our riches are the signs at the several inns upon the road, viz., in some a staff stuck in the thatch with a turf at the end of it ; a staff in a dunghill, with a white rag wrapped about the head ; a pole, where they can afford it, with a besom at the top ; an oatmeal cake on a board in a window ; and at the principal signs of the road I have observed the signs taken down and laid against the wall near the door, being taken from their post to prevent the shaking of the house down by the wind. In short, I saw not one single house, in the best town I travelled through, which had not manifest appearances of beggary and want."

X Merciless exactions, coupled with three successive bad harvests, had by the year 1729 produced a frightful famine in Ireland. The people died of starvation in thousands. Even Boulter was aghast. To Swift the calamity seemed the very consummation of that mingled mass of iniquity and woe, against which he had for so long been vainly crying. Denunciation was useless. Tears would be commonplace. He poured out his rage at the horrors he saw round him in a satire which, by universal assent, is the most terrible piece in all his writings. It is entitled : "A Modest Proposal for preventing the children of poor people in Ireland from being a burden to their parents or country, and for making them beneficial to the public." X

^x This tract is dated 1729, a year earlier than the two preceding.

Swift begins by a reference to the crowd of starving children by whom the Irish beggars are always surrounded. For these children, of whom Swift computes, about 120,000 are born every year, no work can possibly be found. Nothing, therefore, is left for them but mendicancy or vice. Something must be done; whereupon Swift offers the following humble proposal which he trusts "will not be liable to the least objection":

"I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young, healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee or a ragout. I do therefore humbly offer it to public consideration that out of the 120,000 children mentioned . . . 100,000 may, at a year old, be offered in sale to the persons of quality and fortune through the kingdom. A child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends; and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarters will make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with a little pepper or salt will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter.

"I have reckoned upon a medium that a child well born will weigh twelve pounds, and in a solar year, if tolerably nursed will increase to twenty-eight pounds.

"I grant this food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very proper for landlords, who, as they have already devoured most of the parents, seem to have the best title to the children. . . .

"I have computed the charge of nursing a beggar's child (in which list I reckon all cottagers, labourers, and four-fifths of the farmers) to be about 2s. per annum, rags included; and I believe no gentleman would repine to give 10s. for the carcase of a good fat child, which, as I have

said, will make four dishes of excellent and nutritive meat, when he has only some particular friend or his own family to dine with him. Thus the squire will learn to be a good landlord and grow popular among his tenants; the mother will have 8s. net profit.

“Those who are more thrifty (as I confess the times require) may flay the carcase; the skin of which artificially well dressed will make admirable gloves for ladies, and summer boots for fine gentlemen.

“As to our city of Dublin, shambles may be appointed for this purpose in the most convenient parts of it, and butchers, we may be assured, will not be wanting; although I rather recommend buying the children alive than dressing them hot from the knife as we do roasting pigs.”

Swift then mentions a suggestion of his friend, that young lads and maidens between twelve and fourteen years of age would be an excellent substitute for venison. With this, however, he disagrees.

He refers to an objection to the scheme. It will get rid of the useless infants. But what of the crowds of old people and of young labourers? Regarding these he says no trouble need be taken. The former, he points out, are every day “dying and rotting by cold and famine, and filth and vermin, as fast as can be reasonably expected.” And as to the young labourers; “they cannot get work, and consequently pine away for want of nourishment to a degree, that if at any time they are accidentally hired to common labour, they have not strength to perform it; and thus the country and themselves are happily delivered from the evils to come.”

Swift concludes by mentioning a few additional advantages of his plan, as for example:

1. It will lessen the number of papists.

2. "The poorer tenants will have something valuable of their own, which by law may be made liable to distress, and help to pay their landlord's rent; their corn and cattle being already seized, and money a thing unknown."

3. Granted that the maintenance of 100,000 infants may be put at 10s. each per annum, the result of the scheme will be to increase the nation's stock by £50,000.

This scheme, he points out for the benefit of the ascendancy, can in nowise disoblige England: "for this kind of commodity will not bear exportation, the flesh being of too tender a consistency to admit a long continuance in salt."

Lastly comes a personal explanation. Swift points out that he himself "has no children by which he can propose to get a single penny." His proposal is therefore entirely disinterested.

A French critic¹ has well remarked of the "Modest Proposal," that there is nothing like it in all literature. It indicates the utter isolation of Swift from his contemporaries. It marks the supreme point of that savage indignation which, in his own words, ceased not to lacerate his heart. It is indeed matter of doubt whether Swift, after the conclusion of the "Drapier's Letters," anticipated undertaking the leadership of an Irish parliamentary party. The conciliation and wariness needed for such a task had by that date become an impossibility. It would be too much to say that he disbelieved in the efficacy of any parliament to cure the wrongs under which Ireland laboured; and that he would have preferred to see the settlement of the Irish question carried out by some enlightened despot, a Frederick the Great, or a Joseph II. From the year

¹ M. Taine.

1730, however, the gulf between Swift and the parliamentarians of College Green rapidly widens. It is a strange comment on the inconsistency of human nature, that, as the last chapter of this work will show, the final separation should have been brought about by Swift's insistence on the privileges of the Anglican Church.

CHAPTER X.

LETTERS TO ENGLAND. 1727-1735.

Apparent decline in the art of letter-writing—Reasons—Artificial character of most eighteenth-century letters—Genuineness of Swift's letters—Their value—He refuses to revisit England—Extracts from his letters—His melancholy—Attempts to escape from it—English politics at this time—Depression of the Tories—Energy and success of Swift's literary friends—Gay: the "Beggars Opera"—Swift's letters to Gay and the Duchess of Queensberry—Pope: "The Dunciad"—Swift's admiration for Pope—His friendship for Pope and Bolingbroke—The latter's philosophic moralisings—Death of Congreve—Of Gay—Swift's great grief—Death of Arbuthnot—Swift's despondency—Gloomy view of England—Hatred for Ireland.

MANY complaints are uttered nowadays over the decline that has taken place in the art of letter-writing. Like most sweeping statements the charge is hardly fair; it being usually based on a comparison between the letters of private individuals of the present time and those of literary giants of the past. The amount of eighteenth-century correspondence possessing a high artistic value is, however, extraordinarily great in proportion to the general literature of the time. The reason lies not in the large amount of leisure enjoyed by the society of that day, or in the great difficulties that then stood in the way of communication. The usual type of eighteenth-century

letter is not, in the modern sense, a letter at all. Owing to the worthlessness of contemporary newspapers, a letter written by a prominent man of that day contained a vast amount of political or social intelligence, mere reference to which would now be superfluous. Letters, moreover, were constantly written with a view to future publication ; which gave them the character of chapters in an intended autobiography. Even when neither of the above conditions was present, letters were often intended for a large circle of friends. It was thus necessary that they should have some pretensions to lucidity and grace of style. Most of the letters published in the voluminous correspondence between Swift and his English friends possess the above characteristics. Swift's own letters, however, have the true genuine ring. In so far as he came under the spirit of the age, and found himself in correspondence with men who would have shuddered at incorrect syntax or bad logic, they are careful compositions. But he was an exceedingly quick writer ; and, as most of his letters are addressed to friends of tried fidelity, they afford us a real insight into the man and his being. They describe his manner of life ; they show how the solitary chafed against exile without being able to summon up strength to quit it ; and they enable us to trace his gradual decline, from attempted resignation, into a bitterness which no philosophy could soothe.

During the whole period of his latter residence in Ireland, Swift received constant invitations from Pope, Bolingbroke, the Earl of Oxford, Lady Masham, and numerous other friends. He refused them all, partly from a sense of his growing infirmities, pity for which he always resented ; partly because he loved the society of his English friends so strongly, that a subsequent return from them to Ireland would have been more than he could

bear.¹ Pope's health was more delicate even than that of Swift, or it is probable he would have gone to visit Swift at Dublin. A plan was also set on foot by Bolingbroke, by which Swift was to change his deanery for the living of Burfield in Berkshire. But there were impossible obstacles in the way, and Swift would never have endured the loss of dignity thereby required.²

The ensuing five extracts will give some idea of Swift's melancholy and isolation during the years that succeeded Stella's death.

"I do sincerely assure you," he writes to Pope, on March 6, 1729, "that my frequent old disorder, and the scene where I am, and the humour I am in, and some other reasons which time has shown, and will show more if I live, have lowered my small talents with a vengeance, and cooled my disposition to put them to use. I want only to be rich, for I am hard to be pleased; and, for want of riches, people grow every day less solicitous to please me. Therefore I keep humble company, who are happy to come where they can get a bottle of wine without paying for it. I give my vicar a supper, and his wife a shilling, to play with me an hour at backgammon once a fortnight. To all people of quality, and especially of titles, I am not within; or at least am deaf a week or two after I am well. But on Sunday evening it costs me six bottles of wine to people whom I cannot keep out."

In a letter written a little before this time to an Irish lady,³ Swift had stated his theory of old age. "God in

¹ Compare for this, a letter to Pope, dated November 17, 1726. "Going to England is a very good thing, if it were not attended with an ugly circumstance of returning to Ireland."

² See a letter from Bolingbroke to Swift, dated July 18, 1732.

³ Swift to Mrs. Moore, Dec. 27, 1727.

His wisdom hath been pleased to load our declining years with many sufferings, with diseases and decays of nature ; with the death of many friends, and the ingratitude of more ; sometimes with the loss or diminution of our fortunes, when our infirmities most need them ; often with contempt from the world, and always with neglect from it ; with the death of our most hopeful or useful children ; with a want of relish for all worldly enjoyments ; with a general dislike of persons and things ; and though all these are very natural effects of increasing years, yet they were intended by the author of our being to wean us gradually from our fondness of life, the nearer we approach toward the end of it." In his practice, however, Swift was far from submitting without a murmur. "I find myself disposed every year, or rather every month," he writes to Bolingbroke, on March 21, 1729, "to be more angry and revengeful ; and my rage is so ignoble, that it descends even to resent the folly and baseness of the enslaved people among whom I live. I knew an old lord in Leicestershire who amused himself with mending pitchforks and spades for his tenants *gratis*. Yet I have higher ideas left, if I were nearer to objects on which I might employ them ; and contemning my private fortune, would gladly cross the channel and stand by while my betters were driving the boars out of the garden, if there be any probable expectation of such an endeavour." Still, he struggles against his discontent. "When I was your age," he goes on, "I often thought of death, but now, after a dozen years more, it is never out of my mind, and terrifies me less. I conclude that Providence has ordered our fears to decrease with our spirits, and yet I love *la bagatelle* better than ever ; for finding it troublesome to read at night, and the company here growing tasteless, I am always writing bad prose or worse verses, either of

rage or raillery whereof some few escape to give offence or mirth, and the rest are burnt."

Occasionally Swift sought for relief, not in *la bagatelle*—trifling, but in his character of Dublin potentate. On July 8, 1733, he writes to Pope: "I am one of the governors of all the hackney coaches, carts, and carriages, round this town, who dare not insult me like your rascally waggoners or coachmen, but give me the way; nor is there one lord or squire for a hundred of yours to turn me out of the road, or run over me with their coaches and six. Thus I make some advantage of the public poverty, and give you the reasons for what I once wrote, why I choose to be a freeman among slaves rather than a slave among freemen. Then I walk the streets in peace without being jostled, nor even without a thousand blessings from my friends the vulgar. I am lord-mayor of 120 houses, I am absolute lord of the greatest cathedral in the kingdom, am at peace with the neighbouring princes, the lord-mayor of the city, and the archbishop of Dublin, only the latter, like the king of France, sometimes attempts encroachments on my dominions, as old Louis XIV. did upon Lorraine."

There was little consolation to be obtained either from writing verses or frightening hackney coach drivers, as a letter of Swift's to Bolingbroke, dated April 25, 1729, shows. "I never wake without finding life a more insignificant thing than it was the day before; which is one great advantage I get by living in this country where there is nothing I shall be sorry to lose. But my greatest misery is recollecting the scene of twenty years past, and then all on a sudden dropping into the present. I remember when I was a little boy I felt a great fish at the end of my line which I drew up almost on the ground, but it dropped in, and the disappointment vexes me to this very day, and

I believe it was the type of all my future disappointments. I should be ashamed to say this to you if you had not a spirit fitter to bear your own misfortunes than I have to think of them. Is there patience left to reflect by what qualities wealth and greatness are got, and by what qualities they are lost ? ”

Such being Swift's dissatisfaction at exile, the pleasure he derived from a regular correspondence with his English friends can be readily imagined. His old political associates were still pining in the cold shade of opposition. The Whig party, comprising in its ranks all the great peers and influential borough owners, was as impregnable as ever. The Whig prime minister, Sir Robert Walpole, grew stronger and more jovial every year. The first Englishman who had taken up politics purely as a profession, his success was due, not so much to his own energy and determination, as to the exactitude with which he gauged the spirit of the time. It was an age of narrow views and low ideals. For the time being no great question arose to excite national feeling. Walpole gave the country peace and kept the funds high. If he refused to initiate either social or political reform ; if he organised and carried on a tremendous system of public corruption ; if he was gross, low, and sensual in his private life, the mass of the nation cared little. Had the Tories come into office, they could not have made much change.¹ But

¹ Political programmes were unknown at elections of this time ; the contest turning on a few well-worn principles derived from the antagonism between the houses of Stuart and Hanover. The Whigs pointed to increased commerce and the Protestant succession. The Tories railed against the land tax, and denounced the reigning dynasty's fondness for Germany. The voter, knowing that no difference would arise whether Whig or Tory got in, wisely plumped for the most generous candidate. The best picture of an eighteenth-century election is that in Smollett's novel of "Sir Lancelot Greaves," chapter ix.

of such an event there was no chance at present. Bolingbroke, the secret but real organiser of the opposition, looked to the future rather than to the present. In the great political tracts which he composed at this time, he set himself rather to remodel the feelings of the political world at large, than to devise special attacks on the existing government. As he himself expressed it in his "Letter on the Spirit of Patriotism," his object was to "enlarge the minds of men which the minister had narrowed to personal regards alone; to expand their views which he had confined to the present moment, as if nations were mortal like the men who composed them, and Britain was to perish with her degenerate children." What makes this struggle interesting to a biographer of Swift, is the curious fidelity with which Bolingbroke reproduced the maxims advanced by Swift himself in the *Examiner*, and in "The Conduct of the Allies." One notes the same exposure of Whig methods, the same denunciation of party, the same cry of country before faction.

Bolingbroke's theories eventually enjoyed a long period of triumph. To Swift, therefore, must be attributed a share in the movement which, after breaking up the Whig phalanx, and inspiring the exalted statesmanship of Chatham, formed a basis for the ill-omened domination of George III.

To the formal struggle of the opposition against Walpole, Swift paid little attention. In one of his letters he expresses great admiration for Bolingbroke's "Dissertation on Parties," in which party exclusiveness was eloquently denounced. He corresponded with William Pulteney, one of the opposition heroes, and frequently congratulates him on his energy in leading the forlorn hope. But Swift could derive little pleasure from contemplating the constant depression of his former political

allies; and he was at this time far more familiar with the details of Irish than of English affairs.

In literature Swift's friends held the field. Swift's interest in this part of their efforts was extremely keen. In 1728 came the success of Gay's "Beggar's Opera," the idea of which—"an idyll of low life"—had been suggested to Gay by Swift himself. As a literary production the opera had much merit, but it owed its real triumph to the suspected undercurrent of satire against Walpole. For a time Gay became quite a hero; another Sacheverell, Arbuthnot styled him. The performance of a sequel, *Polly*, was stopped by the authorities; but the sequel sold well as a book, and with the profits of the play added thereto, Gay reaped a rich reward.

Gay, like other Tories, had expected to obtain something on George II.'s accession. He was, indeed, offered the post of gentleman usher to the Prince of Wales, but refused to accept so insignificant an appointment. Swift promptly wrote to console him:

"I have known courts these thirty-six years," he says, in a letter dated November 27, 1727, "and know they differ, but in some things they are extremely constant: first, in the trite old maxim of a minister's never forgiving those he hath injured; secondly, in the insincerity of those who would be thought the best friends; thirdly, in the love of fawning, cringing, and tale-bearing; fourthly, in sacrificing those whom we really wish well to a point of interest or intrigue; fifthly, in keeping everything worth taking for those who can do service or disservice."

Swift, however, rarely displays his cynicism for Gay's benefit. The simplicity and child-like affection of the latter touched his heart, and Swift's numerous letters to Gay are mainly concerned with ordinary topics of social life, expressions of the brightest and most genial sympathy, and much fatherly advice about the disposal of his



John Jay

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W. Atkman, pinx.

Dawson, ph. sc.

F. Melius, sc.

John Gay.

70 1941
1941 1940

money, a subject on which Gay was apt to show little solicitude.

Though deprived of court preferment, however, Gay was quite happy with his kind patrons, the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry, in whose household he was practically domiciled. The Duchess¹—"Kitty, beautiful and young," according to a poem of Prior's—had, when quite a child, come under Swift's notice. Though a leader of fashion, she possessed a kind heart and cultured mind, and in a postscript to one of Gay's letters she solicited an introduction to the Dean of St. Patrick's. A regular correspondence was opened, which enabled Swift to resume his old habits of banter with the great.

On April 13, 1731, he writes to the Duchess, as follows:

"MADAM,—Since Mr. Gay affirms that you love to have your own way, and since I have the same affection, I will settle that matter immediately, to prevent those ill consequences he apprehends. Your grace shall have your own way in all places except your own house, and the domains about it. There, and there only, I expect to have mine, so that you have all the world to reign in, baring only two or three hundred acres and two or three houses in town or country. I will likewise, out of my special grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, allow you to be in the right against all humankind except myself, and to be never in the wrong but when you differ from me. You shall have a greater privilege in the third article of speaking your mind, which I shall graciously allow you now and then to do even to myself, and only rebuke you when it does not please me."

Besides the duchess, Swift's chief informant as to the events of the fashionable world in London was his old

¹ She was born Lady Catherine Hyde.

friend Lady Betty, Lord Berkeley's daughter. She had married a Sir John Germaine, but was left a widow in 1718.

In Pope's "Dunciad,"¹ which, like "Gulliver's Travels," had its origin in the discussions of the Scriblerus Club, Swift took an intense pleasure. The Dean of St. Patrick's, past-master as he was in the art of reviling, preferred not to show his peculiar talent unless for some very definite reason. He doubted the wisdom of Pope's bitter attack on the inferior writers of the day. With the "Dunciad" as a poem, however, he was delighted. "When I began this long paper," he says, writing on July 29, 1728, "I thought I should have filled it with setting down the several passages I had marked in the edition I had; but I find it unnecessary, so many of them falling under the same rule. After twenty times reading the whole, I never in my opinion saw so much good satire, or more good sense, in so many lines." There is, it may be said, no more pleasing trait in Swift than his extraordinary freedom from the slightest suspicion of literary jealousy. His letters to Pope are crowded with the most enthusiastic encomiums.

But the chief value to Swift of his correspondence with England lay in its power of keeping warm his old friendships, now become the sole bright spot in his gloomy life. He refers to this, writing to Pope on June 1, 1728; the letter is also interesting as containing a clue to his Irish political career.

"I look upon my Lord Bolingbroke and us two as a

¹ The "Dunciad" appeared in May, 1728. A mock epic poem, it had for its hero Lewis Theobald, who had criticised unfavourably Pope's edition of Shakspeare (1725). The "Dunciad" had been preceded in 1727 by a volume of "Miscellanies," to which Pope, Arbuthnot, and Swift, contributed. In this work also Pope had bitterly satirised his literary rivals.

peculiar triumvirate, who have nothing to expect or to fear; and so far fittest to converse with one another; only he and I are a little subject to schemes, and one of us (I would not say which) upon very weak appearances, and this you have nothing to do with. I do profess without affectation that your kind opinion of me as a patriot (since you call it so) is what I do not deserve; because what I do is owing to perfect rage and resentment, and the mortifying sight of slavery, folly, and baseness about me, among which I am forced to live. And I will take my oath that you have more virtue in an hour than I in seven years; for you despise the follies and hate the vices of mankind without the least ill effect on your temper; and with regard to particular men, you are inclined always rather to think the better, whereas with me it is always directly contrary. I hope, however, this is not in you from a superior principle of virtue, but from your situation, which has made all parties and interests indifferent to you, who can be under no concern about High and Low Church, Whig and Tory, or who is the first minister."

Pope, who was then staying with Bolingbroke at Dawley, was much pleased with these compliments. Bolingbroke also was delighted at being included in such a noble trio.

"I now," writes Pope in answer, on June 28th next, "hold the pen for my Lord Bolingbroke, who is reading your letter between two haycocks, but his attention is somewhat diverted by casting his eyes on the clouds, not in admiration of what you say, but for fear of a shower. He is pleased with your placing him in the triumvirate between yourself and me; though he says that he doubts he shall fare like Lepidus—while one of us runs away with all the power, like Augustus, and another with all the pleasures, like Anthony." Bolingbroke was now

playing the part of Cincinnatus to perfection. "Now his lordship," Pope goes on, "is run after his cart, I have a moment left to myself to tell you that I overheard him yesterday agree with a painter for £200 to paint his country hall with trophies of rakes, spades, prongs, &c., and other ornaments, merely to countenance his calling this place a farm."

Bolingbroke was not so enraptured with bucolic joys, but that he found time for an occasional tour on the continent. He loved, moreover, to moralise on the vanity of things in general. On September 27, 1729, he writes to Swift from Brussels in the following strain :

"Both of us (referring to his wife¹) have closed the tenth lustre, and it is high time to determine how we shall play the last act of the farce. Might not my life be entitled much more properly a what-d'ye-call-it than a farce. Some comedy, a great deal of tragedy, and the whole interspersed with scenes of Harlequin, Scaramouch, and Dr. Baloardo, the prototype of your hero Oxford. I used to think sometimes formerly of old age and of death; enough to prepare my mind."

His lordship, with an evident eye to the admiration of posterity, continued in similar strain in a subsequent letter of November 19th following. Friendship, however, is now the theme :

"While my mind grows daily more independent of the world, and feels less need of leaning on external objects, the ideas of friendship return oftener—they bury me, they warn me more. Is it that we grow more tender as the

¹ This was Bolingbroke's second wife, whom he married in 1720. She was a French lady, the Marquise de Villette. The first Lady Bolingbroke, Swift's old friend, had died in 1718. The letters both of Pope and Bolingbroke to Swift were intended for ultimate publication by the writers. They both sometimes go so far as to refer to the act in the letters themselves.

moment of our great separation approaches, or is it that they who are to live together in another state (for *vera amicitia non nisi inter bonos*) begin to feel more strongly that divine sympathy which is to be the great band of their future society ? ”

Friendships formed in early life are the great solace of old age. None felt this more keenly than Swift. At the same time he saw the possibility of suffering involved therein ; and as, with advance of time, he saw his friends taken away from him by death, his anguish was terrible.

In 1728 came the death of Swift's old school and college friend, William Congreve. The latter, broken down by gout and ophthalmia, had long since retired from the world, and the later intercourse between him and Swift had been very slight. Still, the loss struck Swift as an omen. He had few friends, and the disappearance of one of them made a serious gap. In a letter of February 13, 1729, to Pope, Swift speaks feelingly of Mr. Congreve, “whom I loved from my youth, and who, surely, besides his other talents, was a very agreeable companion. . . . Years have not hardened me, and I have an addition of weight on my spirits since we lost him.” And Swift goes on to contrast himself with hospitable Dr. Helsham with his crowd of table companions. “He has twenty of these at command ; if one of them dies, it is no more than poor Tom ; he gets another or takes up with the rest, and is no more moved than at the loss of his cat ; he offends nobody, is easy with everybody ; is not this the truly happy man ? ”

In 1732 Gay died.¹ Swift writes thus to Pope in the January of 1733 :

¹ Swift received the letter, in which Gay's death was announced, on December 15th. He left it unopened till the 20th, from “an impulse foreboding some misfortune.”

“I received yours with a few lines from the doctor (Arbuthnot), and the account of our losing Mr. Gay, upon which event I shall say nothing. I am only concerned that long living has not hardened me. . . . I would endeavour to comfort myself upon the loss of friends as I do upon the loss of money, by turning to my account-book, and seeing whether I have enough left for my support; but in the former case I find I have not any more than in the other; and know not any man who is in a greater likelihood than myself to die poor and friendless.”

He writes on the same subject to Gay's patroness, the Duchess of Queensberry, in the March following:

“The greatest unhappiness of my life is grown a comfort under the death of my friend, Mr. Gay—I mean my banishment in this miserable country; for the distance I am at, and the despair I have of ever seeing my friends further than by a summer's visit, and this, so late in my life, so uncertain in my health, and so embroiled in my little affairs, may probably never happen, so that my loss is not so great as that of his other friends, who had it always in their power to converse with him. . . . Loss of friends has been called a tax upon life, and what is worse, it is then too late to get others if they were to be had, for the younger ones are all engaged.”

How strongly the death of Gay affected him is shown by the numerous references to it in his later letters. On May 1, 1733, he writes again to Pope on the same subject:

“When I was of your age, I thought every day of death, but now every minute; and a continual giddy disorder, more or less, is a greater addition than that of many years. I cannot affirm that I pity our friend Gay, but I pity his friends; I pity you, and would at least

equally pity myself if I lived among you; because I should have seen him oftener than you did, who are a kind of hermit, how great a noise soever you make by your ill nature in not letting the honest villains of the time enjoy themselves in this world, which is their only happiness, and terrifying them with another. I should have added in my libel that of all men living you are the most happy in your enemies and your friends; and I will swear you have fifty times more charity for mankind than I could ever pretend to."

Soon after this Swift had to condole with Pope on the death of his mother. His friend's sorrow affected Swift also, and the latter's gloom deepened. The death of Gay was soon followed by that of another old friend of Swift's, Lady Masham, who had for some time past been vainly pressing him to pay a visit to England; and in 1735 Swift lost the kindest and the most humorous friend of all, Dr. Arbuthnot.¹ Swift's despondency grew unendurable. "The death of Mr. Gay and the Doctor," he writes to Pope on May 12, 1735, "have been terrible wounds near my heart. Their living would have been of great comfort to me, although I should never have seen them; like a sum of money in a bank, from which I should receive at least annual interest, as I do from you, and have done much from my Lord Bolingbroke."

Under these blows of time and fortune Swift's hatred of the world grew deeper. Public and private, all seemed hopeless. On March 8, 1735, he writes to William Pulteney who was still carrying on the war against Walpole:

"I will do an unmannerly thing, which is, to bequeath

¹ Swift had declared, ten years before, that if there had been a dozen Arbuthnots in the world, he would have burnt his manuscript of "*Gulliver's Travels*."

you an epitaph for forty years hence in two words, '*Ultimus Britannorum.*' You never forsook your party. You might often have been as great as the court can make any man so ; but you preserved your spirit of liberty when your former colleagues sacrificed theirs ; and if it ever begin to breathe in these days, it must entirely be owing to yourself and one or two friends. But it is altogether impossible for any nation to preserve its liberty long under a tenth part of the present luxury, infidelity, and a million of corruptions. . . . But no more of this. I am as sick of the world as I am of age and disease, the last of which I am never wholly without."

If England was bad, Ireland was worse ; and Swift hated the latter all the more, because a perverse fate had doomed him to spend so much of his life within her boundaries. March 23, 1734, he writes thus to a London merchant, Mr. Francis Grant :

"As to my native country, I happened indeed by a perfect accident to be born here, my mother being left here from returning to her house at Leicester, and I was a year old before I was sent to England ; and thus I am a Teague, or an Irishman, or what people please, although the best part of my life was in England.

"What I did for this country, Ireland, was from perfect hatred of tyranny and oppression. . . .

"I have done some smaller services (besides the suppression of Wood's halfpence) to this kingdom, but I can do no more. I have too many years upon me, and have too much sickness. I am out of favour at court, where I was well received during two summers six or seven years ago. The governing people here do not love me. For, as corrupt as England is, it is a habitation of saints in comparison with Ireland. We are slaves, and knaves, and fools ; and, all but bishops and people in employ-

ments, beggars. . . . The few honest men among us are dead-hearted, poor, and out of favour and power."

In the above illustrations of Swift's correspondence with his English friends, during the years 1727-1735, we have anticipated the order of events. The following chapter will be devoted to a brief consideration of Swift's position as a poet; and will contain a few extracts from poems which, though not readily lending themselves to quotation in a sketch of his career, are yet worthy of note. In the next and final chapter, we shall resume our history of Swift's life in Ireland from the year 1731, and follow it to its close in 1745.

CHAPTER XI.

SWIFT AS POET.

Merits of Swift's prose—Defects of his poetry—Its narrow scope—Homeliness—Futility of its passion—No sense of natural beauty or high emotion—Illustrations—"The Curate's Complaint of Hard Duty"—"The Parson's Case"—"The Furniture of a Woman's Mind"—"The Journal of a Modern Lady"—The morning—Tea and scandal—Card-playing—"Satirical Elegy on the Death of the Duke of Marlborough"—"The Beast's Confession"—Its moral—Swift's egoism—Poetical account of his promotion to the deanery of St. Patrick's—Of his daily life—Verses by himself "On the Death of Dr. Swift."

SWIFT's prose is marked by its affection for simple language and its constant use of logical sequences. He dislikes metaphors, and never troubles about graces of style; even when an appeal to the emotions is intended, it is always made through the reason first. As a result, Swift's prose stands pre-eminent in English literature for its clearness. No writer expresses his own ideas more exactly; no writer is more readily understood.

It has been well said that the merits of Swift's prose form the defects of his poetry. Poetry demands sentiment and pathos; to these Swift's genius was altogether alien. Poetry, at its best, takes for its subject the more tender notes of human feeling; Swift regarded them with undisguised contempt. Poetry ignores, or, at any rate, idealises vulgar necessities and mean ideas; Swift loved

to dwell on their naked reality with the intensity of a monomaniac. Poetry in its bolder flights welcomes extravagance of diction; Swift always abhorred it. Swift's poetry is thus nothing but his prose put into rhyme. The language is as simple, and the images as commonplace in the former as in the latter. None of the qualities of true poetry are to be found. Swift never has a refined simile. He goes out of his way to materialise. The coarser, one might add, the more disgusting, a subject, the more he dwells upon it. He denies that poetry can spring from a natural aspiration for better things. In "The Progress of Poetry," he compares the poet to a goose, in its two stages of repletion and ravenousness. In the former it waddles about, feebly cackling; in the latter,

" Her body light, she tries her wings
And scorns the ground and upward springs,
While all the parish, as she flies,
Hear sounds harmonious from the skies."

Even so, the poet, when he makes some profits out of a successful drama, subsides into the joys of a greasy eating-house. When his money is gone, hunger comes, and the poet

" Rises like a vapour,
Supported high on wings of paper,
He singing flies and flying sings,
While here below all Grub Street rings."

Impossible to be more homely. From the fattened goose to the gin-sodden bard; from the parish, with its suggestion of frowsy parson and clod-pated squire, to Grub Street, with its threadbare ballad-mongers, all is gross. But for a higher conception of poetry one would seek in

vain. Swift's celebrated "Rhapsody on Poetry" is merely advice to a huckster how to push his wares :

"Then poet, if you mean to thrive,
Employ your muse on kings alive ;
With prudence gathering up a cluster,
Of all the virtues you can muster,
Which formed into a garland sweet,
Lay humbly at your monarch's feet,
Who as the odours reach his throne,
Will smile and think them all his own."

It may, indeed, be doubted whether Swift ever took a serious view of the power of poetry to arouse noble emotions. He himself uses it to illustrate his wit, or because it lends itself so well to the expression of satire. It is true that Swift's verse often reaches to the extreme of indignant passion. But passion, though always valuable as an index to character, can only excite real and abiding interest if aroused by an adequate cause. Read the following, from a diatribe against Joshua, Lord Allen :

"Let me now the vices trace
From the father's scoundrel race.

Hence the mean and sordid soul,
Like his body, rank and foul,
Hence that wild suspicious peep,
Like a rogue that steals a sheep ;
Hence he learned the butcher's guile
How to cut your throat and smile."

This would have worth, if directed against Domitian or Caligula. It becomes verbiage when applied to an ignorant, commonplace, Irish squire of whom nothing would ever have been heard, had he not by an ordinary act of

political opposition roused Swift's fury. Another characteristic of the poet, love of natural scenery, is also absent from Swift's writings. The man with the muck-rake, he sees nothing save the usual surroundings and appliances of every-day life. Swift's realism, to use a modern term, is so intense and so ill-directed, that it misses the picturesque.

Take for instance the following :

A Description of the Morning.

“ Now hardly here and there a hackney coach,
Appearing, show'd the ruddy morn's approach.
The slip-shod 'prentice from his master's door,
Had pared the dirt and sprinkled round the floor.
Now Moll had whirl'd her mop with dext'rous airs,
Prepared to scrub the entry and the stairs.
The youth with broomy stumps began to trace
The kennel's edge, where wheels had worn the place.
The small-coal man was heard with cadence deep,
Till drowned in shriller notes of, chimney-sweep :
Duns at his lordship's gate began to meet,
And brick-dust Moll had screamed through half the street.
The turnkey now his flock returning sees,
Duly let out a-nights to steal for fees :
The watchful bailiffs take their silent stands,
And schoolboys lag with satchels in their hands.”

Poetry loves to concentrate itself on acts or emotions which ennoble human nature ; love, fidelity, self-sacrifice. Even its darker themes, the treason of an Iago, the lust of a Cenci, have, in their own way, the element of grandeur. Swift deals with petty defects, and from their meanest point of view ; the shallow deceits of a fourth-rate place-hunter, the sordid miseries of a *Traviata* from the slums of Drury Lane. For the plainer virtues he has a certain admiration. But it was a central point of his philosophy

that men habitually act from the basest motives ; and in dealing with the loftiest subjects Swift, to parody a well-known Latin saying, touched nothing which he did not degrade. The following instances have been collected as illustrating the most characteristic features of Swift's poetry. It will be noticed they are all in the rhyming eight-foot metre specially affected by Swift, for its suitability to his purposes. One of his features is the exactness and felicity of his rhymes. As Scott has said, " Rhyme, which is a handcuff to an inferior poet, he who is master of his art wears as a bracelet. Swift was of the latter description ; his lines fall as easily into the best grammatical arrangement, and the most simple and forcible expression, as if he had been writing in prose."

Swift is frequently humorous on the woes of the "inferior clergy." Take the following :

Curate's Complaint of Hard Duty.

' I march'd three miles through scorching sand,
With zeal in heart, and notes in hand,
I rode four more to Great St. Mary,
Using four legs when two were weary :
To three fair virgins I did tie men
In the close bands of pleasing Hymen ;
I dipp'd two babes in holy water,
And purified their mother after.
Within an hour and a half,
I preach'd three congregations deaf ;
Where, thundering out, with lungs long-winded,
I chopp'd so fast, that few there minded.
My emblem, the laborious sun,
Saw all these mighty labours done,
Before one race of his was run.
All this performed by Robert Hewitt :
What mortal else could e'er go through it ?'

Or the following :

The Parson's Case.

"That you, friend Marcus, like a stoic,
Can wish to die in strains heroic,
No real fortitude implies :
Yet all must own thy wish is wise.
Thy curate's place, thy fruitful wife,
Thy busy, drudging scene of life,
Thy insolent illiterate vicar,
Thy want of all-consoling liquor,
Thy threadbare gown, thy cassock rent,
Thy credit sunk, thy money spent,
Thy week made up of fasting-days,
Thy grate unconscious of a blaze,
And to complete thy other curses,
The quarterly demands of nurses,
Are ills you wisely wish to leave,^{*}
And fly for refuge to the grave :
And, O, what virtue you express,
In wishing such afflictions less !
But now should fortune shift the scene,
And make thy curateship a dean ;
Or some rich benefice provide,
To pamper luxury and pride ;
With labour small, and income great ;
With chariot less for use than state ;
With swelling scarf and glossy gown,
And licence to reside in town ;
To shine where all the gay resort,
At concerts, coffee-house, or court ;
And weekly persecute his grace
With visits or to beg a place ;
With underlings thy flocks to teach,
With no desire to pray or preach ;
With haughty spouse in vesture fine,
With plenteous meals and generous wine
Would'st thou not wish, in so much ease,
Thy years as numerous as thy days ?"

Much of Swift's poetry is devoted to attacks on the fair sex.

^{*} Rhymes like this prove that Swift spoke with an Irish brogue.

The Furniture of a Woman's Mind.

"A set of phrases learn'd by rote ;
A passion for a scarlet coat ;
When at a play to laugh or cry,
Yet cannot tell the reason why ;
Never to hold her tongue a minute,
While all she prates has nothing in it.
Whole hours can with a coxcomb sit,
And take his nonsense all for wit ;
Her learning mounts to read a song,
But half the words pronouncing wrong
Has every repartee in store
She spoke ten thousand times before ;
Can ready compliments supply
On all occasions cut and dry.
Such hatred to a parson's gown,
The sight would put her in a swoon ;
For conversation well endued,
She calls it witty to be rude ;
And, placing raillery in railing,
Will tell aloud your greatest failing ;
Nor make a scruple to expose
Your bandy leg or crooked nose ;
Can at her morning tea run o'er
The scandal of the day before ;
Improving hourly in her skill
To cheat and wrangle at quadrille."

Swift pursues the same topic in "The Journal of a Modern Lady."

"By nature turn'd to play the rake well
(As we shall show you in the sequel),
The modern dame is waked by noon
(Some authors say not quite so soon),
Because, though sore against her will,
She sat all night up at quadrille.*

* A game at cards very popular at this time. Cards were the sole occupation at all polite assemblies, both now and long after. Cf.

She stretches, gapes, unglues her eyes,
And asks if it be time to rise ;
Of headache and the spleen complains ;
And then, to cool her heated brains,
Her night-gown and her slippers brought her,
Takes a large dram of citron water.
Then to her glass ; and ‘ Betty, pray,
Don’t I look frightfully to-day ?
But was it not confounded hard ?
Well, if I ever touch a card !
Four matadores, and lose codille !
Depend upon’t, I never will.
But run to Tom, and bid him fix
The ladies here to-night by six.’
‘ Madam, the goldsmith waits below ;
He says his business is to know
If you’ll redeem the silver cup
He keeps in pawn ?’ ‘ First show him up.’
‘ Your dressing plate he’ll be content
To take for interest, cent. per cent. :
And, madam, there’s my Lady Spade
Has sent this letter by her maid.’
‘ Well, I remember what she won ;
And has she sent so soon to dun ?
Here, carry down these ten pistoles
My husband left to pay for coals ;
I thank my stars they all are light,
And I may have revenge to-night.’”

As the lady sips her tea various tradesmen come in and display their wares. She then proceeds with her toilette—a very long affair—and at last dinner, to which several guests have been invited, is announced.

“ At table now she acts her part,
Has all the dinner cant by heart ;

Smollett’s “ Humphrey Clinker ” :—“ Lady Griskin is a person of fashion, to whom we have the honour to be related. She keeps a small rout at her own house, never exceeding ten or a dozen card tables ; but these are frequented by the best company in town.”

' I thought we were to dine alone,
 My dear ; for sure, if I had known
 This company would come to-day—
 But really 'tis my spouse's way !
 He's so unkind, he never sends
 To tell when he invites his friends :
 I wish ye may but have enough !'
 And while with all this paltry stuff
 She sits tormenting every guest,
 Nor gives her tongue one moment's rest,
 In phrases batter'd, stale, and trite,
 Which modern ladies call polite,
 You see the booby husband sit
 In admiration at her wit !"

Dinner is followed by the usual gossip at the tea-table, between the lady and a select *coterie* of female scandal-mongers.

" Now voices over voices rise,
 While each to be the loudest vies ;
 They contradict, affirm, dispute,
 No single tongue one moment mute.

.
 Nor do they trust their tongues alone,
 But speak a language of their own ;
 Can read a nod, a shrug, a look,
 Far better than a printed book ;
 Convey a libel in a frown,
 And wink a reputation down ;
 Or by the tossing of the fan
 Describe the lady and the man."

A little after six in the evening a fresh set of ladies arrive, and cards begin. The heroine loses; her cash being run out, she stakes her jewelry; and as the bad luck continues, she falls to accusing the guests of playing false. A storm of mutual reviling ensues.

"But, conscious that they all speak true,
And give each other but their due,
It never interrupts the game,
Or makes them sensible of shame."

At one in the morning they have supper, after which
cards go on again till 4 a.m.

"Now all in haste they huddle on
Their hoods, their cloaks, and get them gone ;
But first the winner must invite
The company to-morrow night.
Unlucky madam, left in tears
(Who now again quadrille forswears),
With empty purse and aching head
Steals to her sleeping spouse to bed."

Swift was utterly devoid of chivalry. The following
piece will show that, not even in death, were his political
opponents free from his abuse.

A Satirical Elegy on the Death of the Duke of Marlborough.

"His Grace ! impossible ! what, dead !
Of old age too, and in his bed !
And could that mighty warrior fall,
And so inglorious, after all ?
Well, since he's gone, no matter how,
The last loud trump must wake him now ;
And, trust me, as the noise grows stronger,
He'd wish to sleep a little longer.
And could he be indeed so old
As by the newspapers we're told ?
Threescore, I think, is pretty high ;
'Twas time in conscience he should die !
This world he cumbered long enough ;
He burnt his candle to the snuff.
And that's the reason, some folks think,
He left behind so great a stink.
Behold his funeral appears,
Nor widow's sighs, nor orphan's tears,

Wont at such times each heart to pierce,
Attend the progress of his hearse.
But what of that ? his friends may say
He had those honours in his day.
True to his profit and his pride,
He made them weep before he died.
Come hither, all ye empty things !
Ye bubbles raised by breath of kings !
Who float upon the tide of state ;
Come hither and behold your fate !
Let pride be taught by this rebuke,
How very mean a thing's a duke ;
From all his ill-got honours flung,
Turn'd to that dirt from whence he sprung."

Swift's cleverest satirical poem is "The Beast's Confession," written to show how most men mistake their own talents.

" And thus the pious Wolf begins :
Good father, I must own, with shame,
That often I have been to blame,
I must confess on Friday last,
Wretch that I was ! I broke my fast :
But I defy the basest tongue
To prove I did my neighbour wrong ;
Or ever went to seek my food
By rapine, theft, or thirst of blood.
The Ass, approaching next, confess'd
That in his heart he loved a jest :
A wag he was, he needs must own,
And could not let a dunce alone :
Sometimes his friend he would not spare,
And might perhaps be too severe.
But yet the worst that could be said
He was a wit both born and bred ;
And if it be a sin and shame,
Nature alone must bear the blame :
One fault he has, is sorry for't,
His ears are half a foot too short,
Which could he to the standard bring,

He'd show his face before the king :
 Then for his voice, there's none disputes
 That he's the nightingale of brutes.
 The Swine with contrite heart allow'd
 His shape and beauty made him proud :
 In diet was perhaps too nice,
 But gluttony was ne'er his vice :
 In every turn of life content,
 And meekly took what fortune sent.
 Inquire through all the parish round,
 A better neighbour ne'er was found ;
 His vigilance might some displease ;
 'Tis true he hated sloth like peas.
 The Mimic Ape began his chatter,
 How evil tongues his life bespatter ;
 Much of the censuring world complain'd,
 Who said his gravity was feign'd :
 Indeed the strictness of his morals
 Engaged him in a hundred quarrels.
 He saw, and he was grieved to see't,
 His zeal was sometimes indiscreet.
 He found his virtues too severe
 For our corrupted times to bear ;
 Yet such a lewd, licentious age
 Might well excuse a stoic's rage."

Then comes the moral. Does not the lawyer always declare his aversion for legal quibbling? Does not the courtier proclaim his contempt for flatterers? Is not the statesman always vaunting his patriotism? And does not the sharper complain of how people take advantage of his innocence?

It is, however, in writing about himself that Swift's poetic humour is at its best. The following extracts are from a long poem, describing the circumstances of Swift's elevation to the deanery of St. Patrick's. It is imitated from Horace's *Epistles*, book i, Ep. vii. One day, we are told, Lord Oxford, passing along the street, sees an odd-looking parson cheapening books at a stall. Struck

with a whim, Oxford sends his secretary, Mr. Lewis, to ask this parson who he is.

“ Lewis his patron's humour knows,
 Away upon his errand goes,
 And quickly did the matter sift ;
 Found out that it was Dr. Swift,
 A clergyman of special note
 For shunning those of his own coat ;
 Which made his brethren of the gown
 Take care betimes to run him down :
 No libertine, nor over nice,
 Addicted to no sort of vice,
 Went where he pleased, said what he thought,
 Not rich, but owed no man a groat :
 In state opinions *à la mode*,
 He hated Wharton like a toad,
 Had given the faction many a wound,
 And libelled all the junto¹ round ;
 Kept company with men of wit,
 Who often fathered what he writ ;
 His works were hawked in every street,
 But seldom rose above a sheet :
 Of late, indeed, the paper-stamp
 Did very much his genius cramp ;
 And, since he could not spend his fire,
 He now intended to retire.”

Swift is introduced to Harley, becomes his intimate, and receives as a reward for his services the deanery of St. Patrick's.

“ Suppose him now a dean complete,
 Demurely lolling in his seat,
 The silver verge, with decent pride,
 Stuck underneath his cushion side ;
 Suppose him gone through all vexations,
 Patents, instalments, abjurations,
 First-fruits, and tenths, and chapter-treats,
 Dues, payments, fees, demands, and cheats ;

¹ A nick-name for the Whig leaders.

The wicked laity's contriving,
To hinder clergymen from thriving.
Now, all the doctor's money spent,
His tenants wrong him in his rent ;
The farmers spitefully combined,
Force him to take his tithes in kind,
And Parvisol² discounts arrears
By bills for taxes and repairs.
Poor Swift, with all his losses vex'd,
Not knowing where to turn him next,
Above a thousand pounds in debt,
Takes horse, and in a mighty fret
Rides day and night at such a rate,
He soon arrives at Harley's gate ;
But was so dirty, pale, and thin,
Old Read² would hardly let him in.
Said Harley, ' Welcome, reverend dean !
What makes your worship look so lean ?
Why, sure you won't appear in town
In that old wig and rusty gown ?
I doubt your heart is set on pelf
So much that you neglect yourself.
What ! I suppose now stocks are high,
You've some good purchase in your eye ;
Or is your money out at use ? '
' Truce, my good lord, I beg a truce '
(The doctor in a passion cried),
' Your raillery is misapplied ;
Experience I have dearly bought ;
You know I am not worth a groat ;
But you resolved to have your jest,
And 'twas a folly to contest ;
Then, since you now have done your worst,
Pray leave me where you found me first.' "

The following well describes the dean's manner of living :

" On rainy days alone I dine
Upon a chick and pint of wine.

Swift's estate agent.

² Harley's porter.

On rainy days I dine alone,
 And pick my chicken to the bone ;
 But this my servants much enrages,
 No scraps remain to save board-wages.
 In weather fine I nothing spend,
 But often sponge upon a friend ;
 Yet, where he's not so rich as I,
 I pay my club, and so good-bye."

The most striking "document" in Swift's writings is the poem "On the Death of Dr. Swift," written in November, 1731. It is the best illustration of Swift's intense egoism ; wit it also possesses, but of the kind which Daniel O'Connell, speaking of Sir Robert Peel's smile, compared to the silver plate on a coffin.

The moral of the poem is based on the best known of Rochefoucauld's maxims : " Dans l'adversité de nos meilleurs amis nous trouvons toujours quelque chose qui ne nous déplait pas."

After a short exordium on the truth of the above saying, Swift describes how his friends begin to remark on his dotage :

" See how the dean begins to break !
 Poor gentleman, he droops apace !
 You plainly find it in his face.
 That old vertigo in his head
 Will never leave him till he's dead.
 Besides, his memory decays :
 He recollects not what he says ;
 He cannot call his friends to mind :
 Forgets the place where last he dined ;
 Plies you with stories o'er and o'er ;
 He told them fifty times before."

The dean rapidly declines, and at last the fatal day arrives. Then begins the comment. Swift, it should be remembered, had already resolved to insert a clause

in his will, by which the bulk of his fortune was left to found a lunatic asylum. In this bequest some biographers have discovered a generous zeal on behalf of a body of unfortunates, to whom the world at that time was inclined to pay little heed. All this is verbiage. It was due partly to Swift's desire to spite his relatives; partly to perpetuate the idea he desired men to form of his own character.

“Behold the fatal day arrives !
‘How is the dean ?’—‘He’s just alive.’
Now the departing prayer is read ;
‘He hardly breathes.’ ‘The dean is dead.’
Before the passing bell begun,
The news through half the town is run.
‘O ! may we all for death prepare !
What has he left ? and who’s his heir ?’
‘I know no more than what the news is ;
’Tis all bequeathed to public uses.’
‘To public uses ! there’s a whim !
What had the public done for him ?
Mere envy, avarice, and pride :
He gave it all, but first he died.
And had the dean, in all the nation,
No worthy friend, no poor relation ?
So ready to do strangers good,
Forgetting his own flesh and blood !’
Now Grub-street wits are all employ’d ;
With elegies the town is cloy’d :
Some paragraph in every paper
To bless the dean or curse the drapier.
The doctors, tender of their fame,
Wisely on me lay all the blame :
‘We must confess his case was nice ;
But he would never take advice.
Had he been ruled, for aught appears,
He might have lived these twenty years ;
For when we opened him we found
That all his vital parts were sound.’
From Dublin soon to London spread,

'Tis told at court 'the dean is dead.'
 And Lady Suffolk, in the spleen,
 Runs laughing up to tell the queen.
 The queen so gracious, mild, and good,
 Cries, 'Is he gone! 'tis time he should.
 He's dead, you say, then let him rot :
 I'm glad the medals were forgot.'^{*}
 I promised him, I own : but when?
 I only was the princess then ;
 But now, as consort of the king,
 You know 'tis quite another thing.'

.

Here shift the scene, to represent
 How those I love my death lament.
 Poor Pope would grieve a month, and Gay
 A week, and Arbuthnot a day.
 St. John himself will scarce forbear
 To bite his pen and drop a tear.
 The rest will give a shrug, and cry,
 'I'm sorry, but we all must die !'

.

My female friends, whose tender hearts
 Have better learned to act their parts,
 Receive the news in doleful dumps :
 'The dean is dead. (Pray, what is trumps?)
 The Lord have mercy on his soul !
 (Ladies, I'll venture for the vole.)
 Six deans, they say, must bear the pall.
 (I wish I knew what king to call.)
 Madam, your husband will attend
 The funeral of so good a friend.
 No, madam, 'tis a shocking sight,
 And he's engaged to-morrow night :
 My Lady Club will take it ill
 If he should fail her at quadrille.
 He loved the dean—(I lead a heart),
 But dearest friends, they say, must part.
 His time was come, he ran his race,
 We hope he's in a better place.'"

^{*} Referring to some medals promised to Swift by the queen, when Princess of Wales, in 1727.

The poem ends with an elaborate and extremely partial character of the dean, who seems to have forgotten Hobbes' dictum, that no man can be judge in his own cause. He protests his political integrity, recounts his services, and takes much pride for the contempt he had always shown for rank and wealth. He acknowledges a fondness for satire—

“Yet malice never was his aim ;
He lash'd the vice, but spared the name.”

A somewhat curious comment on the libels on Marlborough, Wharton, Steele, Lord Allen, and other victims.

The lines which follow, beginning :

“True genuine dulness moved his pity,
Unless it offered to be witty,”

however, admirably sum up one of Swift's most distinctive traits—his respect for simplicity.

He concludes by a reference to his bequest :

“He gave the little wealth he had
To build a house for fools and mad ;
And show'd by one satiric touch
No nation wanted it so much.”

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

The Established Church in Ireland—Small number of its adherents—Its internal quarrels—Causes of discord between the bishops and parochial clergy—Position of the Protestant Dissenters—Swift's views on the Established Church—His errors—His hatred of the Irish bishops—Opposition to the bill for commuting the tithe on hemp—Fury against the Dissenters—Quarrel with Serjeant Bettesworth—Question of the tithe of agistment—The Irish House of Commons denounces it—Breach between them and Swift in consequence—"The Legion Club"—Political isolation of Swift—Literary work of these later years—The guide to "Polite Conversation"—"The Directions to Servants"—Swift's growing ill-health from 1737—Its causes—He struggles against old age—Loss of friends—Loneliness—"Only a woman's hair"—Deepening senility from 1740—Loss of memory and paralysis—Swift's condition becomes dangerous—Guardians appointed for him, March, 1742—Picture of him during his last three years—His utter helplessness—Is seized with convulsions and dies, October 19, 1745—His burial—And epitaph.

REFERENCE has already been made to the anomalous condition at this time of the Established Church in Ireland. Seven-eighths of the Irish population were Catholics; yet only one-third of the non-Catholic minority followed the Anglican form, the remaining two-thirds being divided among Protestant dissenting sects, of which the Presbyterian was far the largest. The worship of the latter was allowed; but a Test Act passed in 1703 had

shut them out from all civil, military, or municipal offices.

Even the Established Church itself was a prey to internal struggles—a result due to the discord existing between the bishops and the parochial clergy. The Irish bishoprics at that time were extremely wealthy, no less than a nineteenth of the whole soil of Ireland being in their possession; so low, on the other hand, was the value of Irish livings, that though pluralities were universal, it was hard to find an incumbent whose income amounted to £100 a year; cases where it was less than £50 were extremely common.

The bishops, in accordance with the settled policy of the English Government, were invariably chosen from men of English birth and English training. The rank and file of the Irish clergy were, in the majority of cases, sons of Irish landowners, with strong prejudices on behalf of the country their fathers had adopted.

Lastly, the Irish bishops were Whig in politics and Latitudinarian in ideas; their clergy, owing to the hostility then felt by Ireland for the English Whig Government, were, as a rule, High Church and Tory. The Irish clergy had thus very reasonable grounds of complaint against their bishops. These, however, were united to claims for which it is impossible to have anything but condemnation: their rigid insistence on tithes, and their fury against any proposal to repeal the disabilities of Irish Protestant Dissenters. Both these claims, Swift, actuated partly by resentment against the Whigs, partly by ecclesiastical predilection, supported with the most intense pertinacity. His action in doing so has been rightly fixed upon as the great fault of his career as an Irish statesman. The main feature of the error was its inconsistency with his previous conduct. The excessive

tithes exacted by the incumbent were as burdensome, and far more odious than, the excessive rent exacted by the landlord. Toleration of the Irish Catholics was in those days too much to expect from a Protestant politician. It was, however, obvious that if the patriot party in Ireland intended, as Swift hoped, to acquire free trade and parliamentary freedom, the first step would be to sink their petty ceremonial prejudices, and take their vigorous Non-conformist brethren into a close alliance.

The Irish parliament was by no means unwilling to discuss the settlement of tithes, or the repeal of the Test on Dissenters.

Swift declined to entertain the idea of either. As a consequence, the last part of his Irish career sees its early promises completely stultified. The tribune of the people sinks into an advocate of the tithe proctor and the Anglican bigot. The man, who had been the first to demand free trade and legislative independence, ends by becoming the bitter enemy of the one body through whom those blessings could be obtained.

In 1731 the Irish bishops introduced two bills into the parliament at Dublin. The first was intended to enforce clerical residence, for which purpose it contained certain clauses compelling the clergy to build proper parsonages on their glebes. The second was for the subdivision of certain very large livings. Swift was promptly up in arms against these proposals. Their object, he declared, was to make the unfortunate clergy more powerless and miserable than they were before. If these bills were carried, the Irish incumbents would become slaves to the bishops. The latter he attacked with the utmost fury. He had already given his opinion of them. "Excellent and moral men," he remarked, "have been selected on every occasion of vacancy. But it unfortunately has

uniformly happened that, as these worthy divines crossed Hounslow Heath on their way to Ireland to take possession of their bishoprics, they have been regularly robbed and murdered by the highwaymen frequenting that common, who seized upon their robes and patents, came over to Ireland, and are consequently bishops in their stead."

He now drew a cutting picture of the difference between the lordly prelate with his enormous income safely secured, his seat in the House of Peers, his freedom from all onerous duties, and the struggling rector, overburdened with work, and hardly collecting a wretched pittance in tithes from the sullen and mendacious farmer.¹ The two bills passed the Peers, but were thrown out in 1732 by the Irish House of Commons. The latter, however, were soon to fall in their turn under Swift's resentment. In 1733 a bill was introduced therein for the encouragement of the Irish linen manufacture. It contained a clause proposing that the variable tithe on hemp and flax should be commuted for a fixed payment. Swift again came forward with a bitter pamphlet on the subject.² "This bill," said he, using an argument that must have made the bones of Stephen Langton turn in their grave, "is directly against Magna Charta; whereof the first clause is for confirming the inviolable rights of holy church." He proceeded to point out the injustice done to the clergy by cutting short the possible increase of their tithes, which "by the expense, the trouble, and

¹ See Swift's Tracts, "On the Bill for the Clergy residing on their Livings" and "Considerations upon Two Bills sent down from the House of Lords."

² See Swift's "Some Reasons against the Bill for settling the Tithe of Hemp." All these tracts contain much curious information relative to the Established Church of Ireland.

vexation of collecting and bargaining for them, are of all rents the most precarious, uncertain, and ill paid ; ” and he inveighed in bitter terms against the gentlemen of the House of Commons, who, he declared, had introduced the bill solely in order to increase their own rents. The bill, mainly from his vigorous denunciation of it, was eventually lost. But his suspicions of the Irish parliament were too deeply rooted to be allayed. Suggestions for repealing the Sacramental Test on Irish Protestant Dissenters roused him to frenzy ; and much of his time was spent in writing bitter diatribes against that party. His fury was especially aroused by the phrase employed by the advocates of the bill : “ Brother Protestants and Fellow Christians.” He indited a special poem against it :

“ Thus Lamb, renown’d for cutting corns,
An offered fee from Radcliffe scorns,
‘ Not for the world—*we doctors*, brother,
Must take no fees of one another.’
Thus to a dean, some curate sloven
Subscribes, ‘ Dear sir, your brother loving.’
Thus all the footmen, shoeboys, porters,
About St. James’s, cry, ‘ *We courtiers.*’ ”

The struggle against the Dissenters was relieved by an amusing incident. A certain Serjeant Bettesworth, one of the leaders of the Irish bar, a member of parliament, and an advocate for toleration, had happened lately to talk of one of Swift’s own friends, another barrister, Serjeant Singleton, as “ his brother Singleton.” Swift made use of the incident in the above poem as follows :

“ Thus at the bar the booby Bettesworth,
Though half a crown o’erpays his sweat’s worth,
Who knows in law nor text nor margent,
Calls Singleton his brother Sergeant.”

Bettesworth, wild with rage, rushed to the deanery, breathing the most horrible threats. He there learnt that Swift was dining with Mr. Worrall, his vicar. He followed him thither, and insisted on an interview. Swift left the table and met him in a private room. "Dr. Jonathan Swift, dean of St. Patrick's, I am Sergeant Bet-tes-worth!" he roared, in his most bullying tones. "Sergeant?" answered the dean, affecting utter ignorance of his visitor. "*Of what regiment, pray?*" It was a crushing hit, but the learned barrister recovered, and demanded whether Swift was author of the poem above mentioned. Swift refused to answer, and Bettesworth growing obstreperous, Mr. Worrall and the servants turned him out of the house. Bettesworth still threatened revenge, but the Dublin mob rallied like one man in defence of their beloved Drapier. Thirty-one of Swift's neighbours formed themselves into a regular bodyguard for his protection. Bettesworth was pursued with lampoons; and so great was the indignation against him, that his practice at the bar actually fell off to the amount of £1,200 a year.

Bettesworth's discomfiture did not, however, check the anti-clerical policy of the Irish parliament. Opposition had long been made by the graziers to the tithe of agistment or pasturage. Many landowners and members of parliament were graziers on their own account. The clerical claims were bitterly contested in the courts of law, and at last, in 1737, the Irish House of Commons passed a resolution against the tithe in question. This event roused Swift's smouldering anger into a blaze. He shook the dust from off his feet against the parliament of College Green, and vented his rage against that body in the most furious of all his poetical satires, "The Legion Club." One trembles at the thought of a human soul

which could feel and express such intensity of passion. The following extracts will give some idea of this satire :

“ As I stroll the city oft I
 See a building, large and lofty,
 Not a bow-shot from the college,¹
 Half the globe from sense and knowledge.

Tell us what the pile contains?
 Many a head that holds no brains.
 These demoniacs let me dub
 With the name of *Legion club*.
 Such assemblies you might swear
 Meet when butchers bait a bear :
 Such a noise and such haranguing
 When a brother thief is hanging.

Could I from the building's top
 Hear the rattling thunder drop,
 While the devil upon the roof
 (If the devil be thunder-proof)
 Should with poker fiery red
 Crack the stones and melt the lead,
 Drive them down on every skull,
 When the den of thieves is full ;
 Quite destroy that harpies' nest ;
 How might then our isle be blest ! ”

In language paralleled only by that of Dante in his description of the Inferno, Swift figures to himself the parliament hall turned into a madhouse, each member having his allotted cell ; whence, rolling swine-like in filth, he raves and curses at the passers-by. One by one Swift makes the keeper describe the noisome, screaming wretches :

¹ Trinity College, Dublin.

"Who is that hell-featured brawler?
Is it Satan? No; 'tis Waller.
In what figure can a bard dress
Jack the grandson of Sir Hardress?
Honest keeper, drive him further,
In his looks are hell and murder;
See the scowling visage drop,
Just as when he murdered Throp.¹

Keeper, yon old dotard smoke,
Sweetly snoring in his cloak:
Who is he? 'Tis humdrum Wynne,
Half encompassed by his kin:
There observe the tribe of Bingham,
For he never fails to bring 'em;
While he sleeps the long debate,
They submissive round him wait;
Yet would gladly see the hunks
In his grave and search his trunks:
See, they gently twitch his coat,
Just to yawn and give his vote,
Always firm in his vocation,
For the court against the nation."

So strong became Swift's overmastering rage while employed in this composition, that he was compelled, by a sudden attack of illness, to leave it unfinished. With the writing of "The Legion Club" Swift's career in Irish politics comes to an end. Starting under such bright auspices it had ended in savagery and contempt. His possible allies had been weighed in the balance and found wanting, and Swift was left utterly alone.

"Better we all were in our graves
Than live in slavery to slaves,"

¹ The Rev. Roger Throp was a clergyman who, it was said, had died of a broken heart, through being harassed with law-suits by Colonel Waller.

he had written in 1735, referring to the degradation of his adopted country. On the lips of Fitzgerald or Robert Emmett, these words would have meant much. But not yet was to be the uprising of the true Irish nation. Between them and Swift there was a great gulf fixed. And he now enters upon the last period of his life in utter hopelessness.

It is a relief to turn from the dark episodes, which centre round the close of his political career, to the literary work of these later years. His genius was still clear, though its attention was devoted rather to the improvement of old, than to the commencement of new essays. The two chief works connected with this period are the guide to "Polite Conversation" and the "Directions to Servants."¹ They are both referred to in a letter to Gay, dated August 27, 1731. But the first of these works would seem to have been begun many years before this date; the materials for it having been best obtainable during Swift's social career in London, from 1710 to 1713. In his introduction to the former work Swift ironically sets forth the care at which he has been to sum up in this guide the "whole genius, humour, politeness, and eloquence of England." Those, therefore, who wish to achieve fame as great talkers, have only to learn his guide by heart.

The "Polite Conversation" is the best instance of Swift's extraordinary power of observation. No other writer has ever reproduced with such exactness the average conversation of the contemporary fashionable

¹ The manuscript of the "Polite Conversation" was given by Swift to his friend Mrs. Barber, with full leave to publish it for her own benefit. The "Directions to Servants" only saw the light after Swift's death.

world.¹ Its lack of imagination, the pert rudeness it mistakes for wit, its incessant personality, all find their place. The characters are such as Swift must have met in many a drawing-room—Lord and Lady Smart, Lady Answerall, Lord Sparkish, Colonel Atwit, and the incomparable pair, Miss Notable and Mr. Tom Neverout. The scene, it should be remembered, takes place at Lady Smart's, where the above go to a late breakfast. The various bouts between Miss Notable and Tom Neverout are superb in their exquisite pointlessness, *e.g.* :

Miss Notable [to *Tom Neverout*, who has just sneezed].
God bless you! if you ha'n't taken snuff.

Neverout. Why, what if I have, miss?

Miss. Why, then, the deuce take you!

Neverout. Miss, I want that diamond ring of yours.

Miss. Why, then, want's like to be your master.

Neverout [looking at the ring]. Ay, marry, this is not only, but also; where did you get it?

Miss. Why, where 'twas to be had: where the devil got the friar.

Neverout. Well, if I had such a fine diamond ring I wouldn't stay a day in England; but you know, far-fetched and dear bought is fit for ladies. I warrant this cost your father 2½d.

Tom Neverout. Here's poor miss has not a word to throw at a dog. Come, a penny for your thought.

Miss Notable. It is not worth a farthing, for I was thinking of you.

The speaker's whole character reveals itself in the use

¹ An exception should be made, to the credit of our own day, for Mr. Anstey's "Voces Populi."

of such an obvious rejoinder. In the following instance the gentleman comes off best.

Miss Notable. Pray, Mr. Neverout, what lady was that you were talking with in the side-box last Tuesday?

Tom Neverout. Miss, can you keep a secret?

Miss Notable. Yes, I can.

Tom Neverout. Well, miss, and so can I!

These gems of wit are, however, not confined to the above two guests.

Sparkish. I wonder what makes these bells ring?

Lady Answerall. Why, my lord, I suppose because they pull the ropes.

[*Here all laugh.*]

But a collection of detached sayings gives a false idea of the "Polite Conversation." That work is intended to be an actual photograph of contemporary talk, not an ideal picture. Its prevailing tone is thus a soul-killing fatuity, to realise which a long extract therefrom is needed. The reader will note the difference between the following dialogue and that of Congreve, Goldsmith, or Sheridan's plays. Which is likely to have been most true to real life is a question the reader can at once solve by his own observation.

From another point of view the "Polite Conversation" has great value in showing that the tradition, as to the superiority of eighteenth-century conversation to that of our own day, is altogether erroneous.¹ Even at a

¹ Was the talk of even the wits of Swift's day as brilliant as is supposed? He himself says that "the worst conversation I ever remember to have heard in my life was that at Wills' coffee-house, where the wits (as they were called) used formerly to assemble." He

modern afternoon tea it would be difficult to equal the colossal banality of the following. The company above enumerated dine with Lady Smart at three in the afternoon.

Sir John Linger, a Derbyshire squire, whose rusticity is strongly though not unduly marked, joins the company rather late. The dinner begins with oysters, after which the guests set to work on a sirloin of beef, a tongue, a shoulder of veal, and a black-pudding: then comes soup; this is followed by hare, venison pasty, and a ham; some of the guests then try a little goose and stuffing; the sweets consist of jellies, almond pudding, and fritters; and the meal concludes with cheese and dried sturgeon.

Conversation at dinner proceeds thus:

Smart. Oh, here comes the venison pasty; here, take the soup away. [*He cuts it up and tastes the venison.*]
'Sbuds! this venison is musty.

Neverout eats a piece, and it burns his mouth.

Smart. What's the matter, Tom? you have tears in your eyes, I think. What dost cry for, man?

Neverout. My lord, I was just thinking of my poor grandmother; she died just this very day seven years.

Miss takes a piece, and burns her mouth.

Neverout. And pray, miss, why do you cry, too?

Miss. Because you were not hang'd the day your grandmother died.

Smart. I'd have given £40, miss, to have said that.

adds, as an explanation, that a man of wit is never easy but where "he can be allowed to dictate and preside." See Swift's "Hints towards an Essay on Conversation." It is to be presumed, however, that this does not apply to the ordinary conversation between Swift and his intimates in their private parties.

Colonel. Egad ! I think the more I eat the hungrier I am !

Sparkish. Why, Colonel, they say one shoulder of mutton drives down another.

Neverout. Egad ! if I were to fast for my life, I would take a good breakfast in the morning, a good dinner at noon, and a good supper at night.

Sparkish. My lord, this venison is plaguily peppered ; your cook has a heavy hand.

Smart. My lord, I hope you are pepper-proof ; come, here's a health to the founders.

Lady S. Ay, and to the confounders, too.

Smart. Lady Answerall, does your ladyship love venison ?

Lady A. No, my lord, I can't endure it in my sight ; therefore please to send me a good piece of meat and crust.

Sparkish [*drinks to Neverout*]. Come, Tom ; not always to my friends ; but once to you.

Neverout [*drinks to Lady Smart*]. Come, madam, here's a health to our friends, and hang the rest of our kin.

Lady S. [*to Lady A.*]. Madam, will your ladyship have any of this hare ?

Lady A. No, madam ; they say 'tis melancholy meat.

Lady S. Then, madam, shall I send you the brains ? I beg your ladyship's pardon ; for they say 'tis not good manners to offer brains.

Lady A. No, madam ; for perhaps it will make us hare-brained.

Neverout. Miss, I must tell you one thing.

Miss [*with a glass in her hand*]. Hold your tongue, Mr. Neverout ; don't speak in my tip.

Colonel. Well, he was an ingenious man that first found out eating and drinking.

Sparkish. Of all victuals drink digests the quickest : give me a glass of wine.

Neverout. My lord, your wine is too strong.

Smart. Ay, Tom, as much as you're too good.

Miss. This almond pudding was pure good, but it is grown quite cold.

Neverout. So much the better, miss ; cold pudding will settle your love.

Miss. Pray, Mr. Neverout, are you going to take a voyage ?

Neverout. Why do you ask, miss ?

Miss. Because you have laid in so much beef.

Sir J. You two have eat up the whole pudding between you.

Miss. Sir John, here's a little bit left ; will you please to have it ?

Sir J. No, thankee ; I don't love to make a fool of my mouth.

Colonel [*calling to the butler*]. John, is your small beer good ?

Butler. And please your honour, my lord and lady like it ; I think it is good.

Colonel. Why then, John, d'ye see, if you are sure your small beer is good, d'ye mark ? then, give me a glass of wine. [*All laugh.*]

In the inner vagaries of servant-life, Swift always took an extraordinary interest.¹ Illustration has already been given of the fidelity with which he could reproduce the phraseology of servants, in "Mrs. Harris's Petition," and

¹ To his own servants Swift was an exacting, but very just master. He kept them on board wages fixed at a generous rate, and encouraged them to save.

in "Mary the Cookmaid's complaint against Dr. Sheridan." It remains to consider the "Directions to Servants," in which servant life is treated in most elaborate detail. Some critics have gone so far as to consider the "Directions to Servants" to be Swift's masterpiece. This is rather an exaggeration; but certain it is that in no other work of his does Swift so well show his minuteness of insight and genius for verisimilitude. Of one, it might be said the distinguishing characteristic of the "Directions to Servants," it is impossible in these pages to give an adequate idea. That fondness for dwelling on the physically noisome side of human nature, which marks so much of Swift's poetry, is especially prominent in the "Directions to Servants;" and the following illustrations of that work are extracted from the midst of a mass of crudities, with which none but special students of Swift's character and writings need make any acquaintance.

The "Directions to Servants" is, from the point of view of style, the most perfect instance of pure irony in all Swift's writings. Assuming the character of an ex-footman, Swift draws up a code of rules which will enable servants to cheat, rob, deceive, and, in general, "get the better of" the common enemy, *i.e.*, their masters and mistresses.

He begins with rules which apply to servants in general. First of all, they must be true to one another, unless one of them happens to be a tell-tale, in which case they must do their utmost to achieve his or her immediate ruin. If convicted of an omission, they must always have an excuse ready. They should never stir a finger in any business, save that for which they have been actually hired. They must spend as much time out of the house as possible; if this be discovered, they or their fellows must have some lie ready to explain their absence. They must on no account

be afraid of breaking or wearing out their master's goods. They must get drunk at every possible opportunity. They must arrange matters so as to obtain as much as possible out of visitors to the house in the way of "tips"; and those who are ungenerous should be treated with insult and neglect.

But it is in the directions to individual servants that the extraordinary cleverness of the book is best displayed. The knowledge of domestic life and the astounding gravity of the tone are alike perfect.

The special directions to the butler run as follows :

"If a humble companion, a chaplain, a tutor, or a dependent cousin, happen to be at table, whom you find to be little regarded by the master and the company (which nobody is readier to discover and observe than we servants), it must be the business of you and the footman to follow the example of your betters, by treating him many degrees worse than any of the rest; and you cannot please your master better, or at least your lady.

"If any one calls for small beer toward the end of dinner, do not give yourself the pains of going down to the cellar, but gather the droppings and leavings out of the several cups and glasses, and salvers, into one; but turn your back to the company, for fear of being observed. On the contrary, when any one calls for ale towards the end of dinner, fill the largest tankard cup top-full, by which you will have the greatest part left to oblige your fellow-servants, without the sin of stealing from your master. There is likewise a perquisite full as honest, by which you have a chance of getting every day the best part of a bottle of wine for yourself; for you are to suppose that gentlefolks will not care for the remainder of a bottle; therefore always set a fresh one before them after dinner,

although there has not been above a glass drunk out of the other. . . .

“If you are curious to taste some of your master’s choice bottles, empty as many of them just below the neck as will make the quantity you want ; but then take care to fill them up again with clean water, that you may not lessen your master’s liquor. . . .

“I now come to a most important part of your economy, the bottling of a hogshead of wine, wherein I recommend three virtues, cleanliness, frugality, and brotherly love. Let your corks be of the longest kind you can get ; which will save some wine in the neck of every bottle ; as to your bottles, choose the smallest you can find, which will increase the number of dozens, and please your master ; for a bottle of wine is always a bottle of wine, whether it hold more or less ; and if your master has his proper number of dozens, he cannot complain. . . .

“In bottling wine, fill your mouth full of corks, together with a large plug of tobacco, which will give to the wine the true taste of the weed, so delightful to all good judges in drinking. . . .

“Always lock up a cat in the closet where you keep your china plates, for fear the mice may steal in and break them.”

Then come directions to the cook.

“When you roast a long joint of meat, be careful only about the middle, and leave the two extreme parts raw, which will serve another time, and will also save firing. . . .

“Always keep a large fire in the kitchen when there is a small dinner, or the family dines abroad, that the neighbours, seeing the smoke, may commend your master’s housekeeping ; but when much company is invited, then be as sparing as possible of your coals, because a great

deal of the meat being half raw will be saved, and serve next day. . . .

“If a lump of soot falls into the soup, and you cannot conveniently get it out, stir it well, and it will give the soup a high French taste. . . .

“Scrape the bottom of your pots and kettles with a silver spoon, for fear of giving them a taste of copper. . . .

“Never make use of a spoon in anything that you can do with your hands, for fear of wearing out your master’s plate.

“When you find that you cannot get dinner ready at the time appointed, put the clock back, and then it may be ready to a minute. . . .”

The “Directions to Servants” was intended to form an elaborate scheme of misconduct for the whole household. The work was never finished. But fragments of the latter part which still remain are well worthy of the beginning. The following is a direction to the children’s maid: “If a child be sick, give it whatever it wants to eat or drink, although particularly forbid by the doctor; for what we long for in sickness will do us good; and throw the physic out of the window; the child will love you the better; but bid it not tell.”

From the year 1737 Swift’s health began to grow rapidly worse. Recent investigations have shown that his illness was in no way akin to insanity. From his youth he had suffered from a peculiar disease of the parts near the ear, known technically as *labyrinthine vertigo*. Hence those early attacks of giddiness and deafness, which he wrongly attributed to over-indulgence in fruit and exposure to cold. The increased severity of his distemper, as time went on, engendered a belief that it would eventually prostrate him before his life reached its allotted span; and constant

brooding on this subject combined with senile decay and sense of disappointment, to produce the gloom and irritability of his later years.¹

Old age is to the misanthrope what winter is to the poor—a time at which the evils incident to their condition come upon them with an unexpected force. Swift had exulted in his freedom from human sentiment and his contempt for human weakness, so long as physical and mental vigour allowed his genius to have full play. When senility and disease began to check the exercise of his powers, he at last realised his isolation. Though he would have scorned the suggestion, what he now lacked was that sympathy and kindness which, coming from one's fellows, brightens the declining years of ordinary men. As early as 1699 he had drawn up a curious code for his conduct “when he should come to be old.” It points to a fixed resolve to avoid the weaknesses natural to that state of life. For instance :

“Not to scorn present ways, or wits, or fashions, or men, or war.

“Not to be fond of children, *or let them come near me hardly.*²

“Not to be covetous.

“Not to hearken to flatteries, nor conceive I can be loved by a young woman ; et eos qui hæreditatem captant odisse ac vitare.

“To conjure some good friends to inform me which of

¹ The reader is referred to Sir William Wilde's interesting book, “The Closing Years of Dean Swift's Life” (Dublin, 1849). Swift's disease is also the subject of an article by Dr. Bucknill, in the journal *Brain*, for January, 1882.

² The words in italics were subsequently crossed out by a later possessor of the manuscript. The reader will find a facsimile of these rules as originally written, in Forster's “Life of Swift,” p. 104.

these resolutions I break or neglect, and wherein, and reform myself accordingly."

During the years 1738 and 1739 Swift continued to act as if his powers were unimpaired. He kept up his old erectness of bearing and arch severity of expression. But the louring gloom of the brow, the savage curl of the lip, and the heavy folds which gave a new coarseness to the outline of the throat and chin showed the change within. He refused to wear spectacles, by which he so injured his eyesight that he was scarce able to read. In spite of growing weakness, he took the most violent exercise every day. He continued to give entertainments at the deanery, but his parsimony had grown so keen that he now chafed at the expense of a meal or a bottle of wine.

He tried to retain his old circle of friends, though his temper was now so uncertain that few but sycophants could endure it for long.¹ One day Dr. Sheridan, who had been compelled by money troubles to leave Dublin for Cavan, ventured in obedience to an old request of Swift's to remind the dean of his growing defects. The latter at once turned upon him in a fury, and treated the honest doctor with such insolence that the intimacy between the two had to be broken off. Nor was Swift's loneliness relieved by pleasing memories. More had indeed been given to him than to others of his contemporaries;

¹ *E.g.*, the Rev. Matthew Pilkington and his wife Letitia. The former acquired Swift's favour by humbly swallowing the dregs of a bottle of wine, accompanied by the polite invitation, "I always keep some poor devil of a parson to drink the foul wine for me." The latter would seem to have been a worthy successor of Mistress Doll Tearsheet. Her memoirs, however, contain much curious information relative to the dean's social habits during his latter years.

political success, literary triumphs, the homage of men, and the love of women. But, in the view he had forced himself to take of life, all these things were worthless. By a strange irony, the logical result of his philosophy had been to reduce him to the level of that Puritan barrenness on which he had vented such bitter scorn. One sees in both the same contempt for human learning and the same derision for human sentiment; the same fixed belief in the hopeless depravity of man, and the same hatred of those fair and tender graces which give this world all its best beauty. At a time like this, one asks whether the memory of that dearest friend of all brought not with it some source of gentler feeling. After Swift's decease there was found in his desk a packet containing one of Stella's dark curling locks. It bore the superscription: "Only a woman's hair." Was this callousness? Or was it suffering unspeakable, veiling itself under the affectation of callousness? It is almost a presumption to try to penetrate into the secrets of this last solitude. Dark as was all reminiscence of the past, the future was darker still. The enemy was approaching, silent, irresistible; and Swift looked forward in terror to the day when, his small remaining powers completely gone, he would sink into a useless burden, which escaped men's scorn solely because it moved their pity. At times, it is said, he fell on his knees and prayed despairingly that he might die before this worst state came upon him.

One contemplates with respect and awe the miseries of a decline, so stubborn and yet so disconsolate.

By the year 1740 Swift's memory had become so weak, that it could only retain the contents of a letter for a few hours after reading it. He could hardly recall any but the closest friends. His deafness had increased. But he

still clung desperately to life. He continued to take an interest in things, and to receive visits. In the May of 1740 he finished drawing up his third and final will. Except for some trifling legacies, his fortune, eventually amounting to about £11,000, was left to form the basis of a fund for building a public lunatic asylum in Dublin. Up to January, 1741, he continued to write short notes. But from that date a change for the worse took place. Paralysis of the facial muscles rendered articulation almost impossible. He became subject to sudden fits of anger. He no longer knew his friends, and the mere sight of a human face would plunge him into a paroxysm of fury. Mr. Deane Swift going to visit him, he pointed to the door, saying "Go, go!" but directly afterwards, he raised his hand to his head and began to speak with the words: "My best understanding —"; then, finding himself unable to continue, he seemed to sink into a stolid despair. He spent whole days walking up and down his room like a caged animal. He would never eat while any one was present, and his food had to be left by his side to remain, often, untouched for hours. His friends now fearing that he might lay violent hands on himself, guardians were, in March, 1742, appointed for him by the Court of Chancery. During the October of that year an abscess formed behind his left eyelid, the pain of which was so frightful that it took the efforts of five men to keep him from tearing out his eye. At last the swelling subsided, and at the first reaction from torture his mind seemed to recover itself. It is said that "he knew Mrs. Whiteway,"¹

¹ Born Martha Swift, daughter of Adam Swift, one of the dean's paternal uncles. She was married first to the Rev. Theophilus Harrison; on his death she espoused a Mr. Whiteway. Though a relative, she was always a welcome guest at the deanery, where she spent much time during Swift's last years.

took her by the hand, and spoke to her with his former kindness; that day, and the following, he knew his physician and surgeon, and all his family, and appeared to have so far recovered his understanding and temper, that the surgeon was not without hopes he might once more enjoy society, and be amused with the company of his friends.”¹ But this glimmer of sensibility was soon followed by an apathy, from which he never roused himself. He was very quiet and gave his servants no trouble. He knew no one; but there was sometimes a faint sign that his mind was not quite destroyed. When the light of the bonfires with which the Dublin mob were celebrating his birthday on November 30, 1743, shone through the deanery windows, he seemed to want to know what it meant; and on being told, said “’Tis all folly; better let it alone.” On the Christmas Day of that year Mr. Deane Swift came to dine with him. The housekeeper said, “Won’t you give Mr. Deane Swift a glass of wine”; on this, he shrugged his shoulders as had been his wont in times past, when playfully remarking to a guest: “You will ruin me in wine.” He then tried to speak; and his efforts being useless, he gave a heavy sigh. His visitor could scarcely bear the scene. Some months later, in the March of 1744, he marked his housekeeper removing a knife out of his reach, and, rocking himself in his chair, muttered several times: “I am what I am.” He could repeat his servants’ names and would sometimes reprimand them for carelessness; for once seeing one of them trying to break a large coal on the hearth, he said: “That is a stone, you blockhead.” But from the beginning of 1745 he kept complete silence; and appeared to be unconscious of what was going on around him. Strangers

¹ So Delany.

sometimes came in a sort of frightened curiosity to gaze at what had once been Jonathan Swift, but he took no notice of them.

Suddenly, in the middle of October, 1745, he was seized with a strong convulsive fit, which lasted for thirty-six hours. On its leaving him, his strength was found to be finally exhausted. He sank rapidly and died on October 19, 1745. He was in the seventy-eighth year of his age.

At the time of his death Swift had not a single friend. With the exception of Bolingbroke, he had outlived all his literary and political associates.¹ His relatives he had always regarded with indifference and contempt. His later acquaintances had either dropped off or forgotten him. But the news of his decease suddenly evoked a flood of memories. Crowds flocked to have a view of the great dean as he lay in the grim stillness of death. Men recalled to one another instances of his tremendous sarcasm, of his relentless denunciation of tyranny and wrong, of his political triumphs, which, though marred by egoism, bigotry, and vindictiveness, had been none the less splendid, serviceable, and enduring. A public funeral would have been only common justice. But in deference to the stern injunctions found in his will, he was buried on October 22nd, in his church of St. Patrick, at dead of night; in strict privacy, without pomp, trappings, or invited throng of mourners. To his views of life, he was faithful to the end; and in the spirit of the proud Roman requiem,

"Victrix causa deis placuit, sed victa Catoni."

Swift's epitaph exulted in his escape from the sight of that human vice and folly which had ceased not to

¹ Pope had died in 1744. Bolingbroke survived till 1751.

lacerate his heart, and dared mankind, if they could, to imitate his struggles for the right.¹

¹ The following is the full text of Swift's epitaph :

HIC DEPOSITUM EST CORPUS
JONATHAN SWIFT, S.T.P.
HUIUS ECCLESIAE CATHEDRALIS
DECANI :
UBI SÆVA INDIGNATIO
ULTERIUS COR LACERARE NEQUIT.
ABI VIATOR,
ET IMITARE, SI POTERIS,
STRENUUM PRO VIRILI LIBERTATIS VINDICEM.
OBIIT ANNO (1745) :
MENSIS (OCTOBRIS) DIE (19)
ÆTATIS ANNO (78).

This epitaph was drawn up by Swift during his last years of vigour. In his will, dated May, 1740, he gives directions that the above words are to be inscribed over his tomb on a black marble tablet, "in large letters, deeply cut and strongly gilded."

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